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*We beg to state that we decline to return or to enter into correspondence as to rejected communications; and to this rule we can make no exception. Manuscripts not acknowledged within four weeks are rejected.*

## NOTES OF THE WEEK.

The Ulster Unionist Council has resolved that the Churchill-Redmond meeting shall not be held in the Ulster Hall. Mr. Churchill chose the citadel of Irish loyalism for the base of a combined attack with the Nationalist leader on the union of Ireland with England. This, as children would say, was simply to dare the Ulster Unionists to stop him. They, of course, refuse to be dared. Any man who thus sets out to brave all the most cherished sentiments and associations of his opponents must expect a reception warmer than political. Anyhow Mr. Churchill is going to get it. We are frankly glad. This is no time for correctness and studied moderation; and sermons preached to Ulster on that text just now are mere waste. The air of mystification about this matter annoys some. But would not the Unionist garrison be fools indeed, if they apprised the invader of their plan beforehand?

So far as one can make out—for the "Times", not very kindly to its readers, prints his letters in type that is painful to read—Mr. Dillon's case against Sir Horace Plunkett is that Sir Horace has broken his word of honour. What is the word of honour? According to Mr. Dillon, it is that Sir Horace Plunkett twenty-one years ago—their friendship has come of age—waited on the great man and outlined a scheme for improving farming in Ireland. The great man proceeded to crab it, but nobly mentioned that so long as Sir Horace did not run it on political lines it should not be opposed. The great man also mentions that Sir Horace said that he did not wish to run it on political lines, and that, if anything, he rather inclined towards Nationalist ideas. It is quite possible that Sir Horace Plunkett's memory of this little episode may differ somewhat from Mr.

Dillon's. Yet, even assume he did say these things to the great man, where is honour broken?

Because—or if—Sir Horace Plunkett twenty-one years ago said to Mr. Dillon that he was not going to run his agricultural schemes for Ireland on political lines, there is no breaking of honour, if later he does take an active part in politics, and that active part is not as the Nationalists would have it. In truth Mr. Dillon's cry about honour is a weak and futile cry. It is worse—it is ridiculous. It seems that in his vanity Mr. Dillon supposed twenty-one years ago that he had Mr. Plunkett in his pocket. But a year or two later he found out that he had made an entire mistake. He awoke to discover in Mr. Plunkett, as he himself admits woefully, a very effective politician indeed—and on the wrong side.

Some of us can recall Mr. Plunkett quite well at the time, or soon after the time about which Mr. Dillon tells his terrific secrets; and we can recall that he burned then, as he burns now, with a steady fire of patriotism. It is a fire that does not appear much at the surface; deep fires rarely do; but it has never died down. The enthusiasms of most politicians tend to turn to ashes after twenty years or so largely of disappointment, or at least of hope indefinitely deferred. It has not been so with Sir Horace Plunkett. If Mr. Dillon will go to the Government Front Bench, he will find two or more leading men there who can tell him—whether they will is another thing—that Sir Horace Plunkett has worked wholly to the good of Ireland.

The vulnerable part of a great man has commonly been the heart, when a woman is concerned, but with Mr. Asquith it looks more like the heel. The profoundly serious question, or the excruciating joke, of whether he should say yes to the women or no to the women, or whether he should get the women themselves—coupled with the men—to say it for him and for themselves, has been too much for this man who derides—in others—a halting, faltering line. So he has gone to the Hotel Igeia. Whilst he is there, he ought to go into the Palermo Museum and study that noble Greek metope in which Actæon is represented as being eaten by his own hounds set on by the woman.

Meanwhile all his best friends in the press at home are turning round and round—many times round, after the way of giddy people—in favour of the only way of sparing him from the danger of saying yes or no. The "Chronicle" wavers, the "Westminster" capitulates to a suggestion which a little while ago they found to be simply blasphemy. The "Westminster" is frankly at Mr. F. E. Smith's service; we suppose the "Daily News" in desperation will come under the banner of Mr. Long. When party newspapers have so little to hope for, and nothing at all to fear, from their own political leaders, what is more natural than that they should throw themselves at the heads of the leaders opposite? Well, one has heard of a British Government splitting on a rock, but never before of one that split upon a petticoat.

\*Most of the stories told of Mr. Labouchere were invented in the Lobby or on the Stock Exchange and elsewhere. But there was one saying of his that deserves to live. "I don't object", he said, "to Mr. Gladstone having an ace up his sleeve sometimes, but I object to his assuming that Providence put it there." Another story we have heard, but do not believe. In a railway carriage a man opposite was smoking a very bad cigar. It annoyed Labouchere, who begged the loan of it for a moment to relight his own. This done, he flung the bad cigar out of the window, instantly apologised for his absurd mistake, and offered to the stranger his own cigar-case. Now if it had been a cigarette there might have been truth in the story, for Labouchere almost lived by good cigarettes and brilliant talk.

A true story is that when he was asked what sort of paper he was going to found after leaving Edmund Yates, Labouchere replied "another and a better 'World'". There is no doubt he was a brilliant journalist—perhaps his French descent had something to do with this, though that is going somewhat far back! We remember talking with Oscar Wilde—Wilde did the talking chiefly—about journalism. He thought his brother, Willie Wilde, was the most brilliant journalist living, and gave Labouchere second place. Willie Wilde was extraordinarily quick and inventive, but he had nothing like the knowledge and wit and force of Labouchere. The Parliamentary notes in "Truth" from week to week, and the slashing personal leaders, were the best Parliamentary "stuff" of the time. He never penned a dull word or a dead word. Every line lived its day, even its week. Yates was a clever man, but Labouchere was perhaps twice as clever. But he did not invite or encourage talent or originality in his paper as Yates always tried to do. Yates was more generous and more understanding than Labouchere in literary matters.

Perhaps it was not till he met Rhodes in the South Africa Committee that Mr. Labouchere ever felt really humbled at Westminster. Rhodes, who appeared bored and testy when Mr. Bigham, a political friend, was questioning him, woke up joyfully when Mr. Labouchere took him in hand. "I read 'Truth'", said Rhodes pleasantly, "to see my own faults." A titter ran round the table. Labouchere was not a vain or small enough man to be pleased by the compliment. On the contrary, it confused him considerably. The whole manner of Rhodes, impulsive, eager, rather naïve, and out of all keeping with the true Parliamentary style, was too much for Labouchere. He hesitated, he fidgeted, and, too clearly, was ill at ease. He was to get everything from Rhodes—he got nothing. He had bullied Sir Graham Bower—a vastly different matter! Labouchere must have felt that whilst he was questioning Rhodes, it was really himself under fire—and the fire was that most trying of all the ordeals—fire of laughter.

At about 1890 and 1891 Labouchere did a fatal thing—he took himself too seriously. He starred himself for office. The office, to start with, was, if we recol-

lect aright, to be the Postmaster-Generalship, with a seat in the Cabinet. So he even went about telling friends what he was going to do when the next Government was in. What he actually did was to engage in a heated controversy with Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Marjoribanks in the pages of "Truth"—in which there was only one controversialist, the editor of "Truth" himself. Mr. Gladstone sent Mr. Marjoribanks to tell Mr. Labouchere very delicately why Mr. Labouchere could not be in the Government: but, to assuage the pain, Mr. Gladstone sent a message that he should always be glad to have Mr. Labouchere's kind advice. Of course it aggravated instead of soothing the hurt.

It is possible to be merry over the evicted tenants of Boxted. Life, said Horace Walpole, is a comedy for the man who thinks, a tragedy for the man who feels. The comedy of Boxted is obvious. A philanthropist leaves a sum of money with the idea that his trustees will bring back to the land a few of those imaginary thousands of townsmen who have only to be given a cottage and a holding to become healthy and prosperous. The Salvation Army is his agent; and his agent builds fifty cottages, and puts into them fifty happy families. But there is a time of reckoning, when the agent comes to inspect the holdings and to divide the successes from the failures; whereupon the failures are ordered back to town. But they refuse to move. At that point, says "General" Booth, "I decided that the law must come in and help me to get these poor misguided fellows out".

These "poor misguided fellows" bring us to the tragedy of Boxted, the hard struggle of ignorant townsmen with the soil. Put there without experience, or expert advice, their operations were speedily "the laugh of the countryside". Mr. Booth accounting for the failures speaks of ill-health, unsuitable wives, indolence, love of town life, etc. He avoids the root reason of all. A thorough knowledge of farming was necessary, either in the men themselves, or in the directors. Mere industry is not enough to make the small holding pay. The small holding will only have a chance of success when the idea is thoroughly broken that mere returning to the land is salvation. The philanthropist, seeking for his legatees' salvation in the land, should not have taken as his agent a body whose cock-sure knowledge is of salvation elsewhere.

What does the Persia Committee really want? Russia must be restrained; the weak nation must be protected; we must interfere in this direction and that; and, apparently, all this will make for peace and friendliness with the Powers of Europe. Or are we to bluster, threatening the sword which shall on no account be drawn? Has Mr. Ramsay Macdonald reflected that no Government worthy of respect could do as his friends require without being prepared to back up their words with arms? These foreign politicians of the Persia Committee are more afraid of force than of anything. The only kind of force they know of is force of epithet.

The most curious remark of the evening came from Professor Browne: "To say that it was now impossible to maintain the integrity of Persia was a confession that we were degenerate descendants of much worthier ancestors". A remarkable non sequitur! The degeneracy logically pointed at in the confession is not a degeneracy of Britons. We note that a reference to Russia's Parliament at this meeting was received with cries of "Shame". Is this because some of the invitations for the coming British Parliamentary visit to St. Petersburg have gone astray? The real reason, we suspect, is that the Parliament of Russia is not so successful, as Liberals count success, as the Parliament of Persia.

Lord Curzon did not mean it ironically we are sure, none the less there was terrible irony in his warning to the Geographical Society on Monday that "China was now for the first time to be seen as a growing,

pushing and ever aggressive power". China! rent in twain, on the verge of anarchy, the Son of Heaven fallen, and four hundred millions, whose only idea of government and their country has been their Emperor, about to stake all on the desperate throw of a Republic! Tibet may rest in peace. Yet Lord Curzon is right. A Chinese Republic may easily be more aggressive than the Empire. He might well regret that "our action or inaction" had encouraged Chinese self-assertion.

The armistice in China has again been extended. Dr. Morrison, in the "Times", foretells the issue within the next few days of two Edicts whereby the Republic will succeed the Monarchy by Imperial will. The Republic, in these circumstances, would at least be constitutionally born. The establishment of the Republic would be entrusted to Yuan Shih-kai, who would be candidate for the Presidency; Dr. Sun Yat Sen retiring in his favour, and the candidature of Yuan being recognised by the Republicans at Nanking. The second Edict would provide for the abdication of the Manchus. Yuan was on his way from an audience with the Empress Dowager on Tuesday last—the audience at which these Edicts were probably drawn up—when the attempt upon his life was made.

Election honours in Germany are with the Centre. Five years ago they were attacked by the Government, but they came back to Berlin a hundred strong as usual. This time they share with the Government the odium of the financial policy which has made the previous supporters of the Radical left vote Socialist; but they won eighty-one seats outright and can look forward to the necessary twenty at the second ballots. The Centre thus finds itself more firmly established than ever as the one real Parliamentary force in Germany. It has never attempted to wrest from the Conservatives a share of the great administrative posts, but, by adroit use of its Parliamentary power, it has made itself indispensable to the Government. Moreover, where it exists it is supreme, excluding the Social Democrats altogether. Out of the 121 second ballots in which the Socialists are engaged, there are only twelve in which a Centre candidate opposes them.

The position of the Government is that it can rely upon the electorate to vote straight only in rural Prussia and in the Catholic provinces. In all the non-Catholic towns the Socialists have swept the board. They have won the bulk of their seats from Radicals and National Liberals, and the Government is not, perhaps, altogether sorry. For the whole Left, Socialist and non-Socialist, is agreed in demanding the Parliamentary responsibility of Ministers, a thing which the nature of the German Government forbids. With a hundred Socialists in the Reichstag we are not likely to hear many more denunciations of agrarian officialism by the capitalists of the Hansa Bund.

How is it that the National Liberals have done so badly? They represent Germany's financiers, manufacturers, and shippers—men whom the outside world regards with respect—and yet they have only managed to win four seats in the first ballot. They fail because the big parties in Germany are all local, springing from conditions older than the Empire, while the National Liberals have come into being thanks to the impetus which German unity gave to German trade. They are thus scattered all over the Empire, and even when they can concentrate, as in the west ends of the big towns, they are overwhelmed by the labour vote. Their one hope lay in combination with the Radicals, and this has proved impossible. In Germany, as in England, the Radicals are concerned to destroy, whereas the National Liberals want to reconstruct.

The Government can lean on the support of land and capital, and of the two popular parties, one, the Centre, is its close ally. But the fact that a good third of the electorate has voted Socialist is serious. It means that the Government is out of touch with the masses in non-Catholic Germany. Will it attempt to

win them over, as the English have attempted to win over their Bengali critics in India? Probably not. Germany is a military monarchy, and the voter's business is to do what he is told. If he will not, he is more likely to be deprived of his vote than to induce the Government to change its ways. His one chance lies in his ability to submit an alternative policy, and of such a policy there is no prospect so long as the reforming and the revolutionary Socialists continue at daggers drawn.

M. Poincaré has succeeded in forming a Ministry of stars. On the Republican stage at this moment there is only one star we can think of who is not in it. But he is a big one to be outside the constellation. M. Clemenceau may not have wanted office—we can well believe there is only one office he would want, or indeed take—but that does not make him altogether a pleasant quantity for the Ministry to have on the edge of their system. He will be too much in the position in these days of the lonely nation without allies described by Sir E. Grey. M. Delcassé returns to the Navy, and M. Briand comes in as Minister of Justice. M. Millerand is Minister for War, and M. Bourgeois for Labour. If general brilliancy were a guarantee of a Cabinet's success, this one would be safe. Unfortunately too much talent seems to be fatal to Ministries, perhaps even more than too little.

The capture by Italian torpedo-boats of the French mail steamer "Carthage" starts an intricate problem of international law rather than a difficult situation in international politics. Aeroplanes are "conditional" contraband, and there were aeroplanes on the "Carthage". They were being taken over for MM. Aubré and Duval, who were to fly at a meeting in Tunis. There is no evidence of any conspiracy by these gentlemen to get their machines into the hands of the Turks; and the vessel was passing between neutral ports. The lawyers are therefore doubtful if the Italian Government is justified in its conduct even under that latest document of international law—the Declaration of London.

The Territorial force is valetudinarian: it is always feeling its own pulse and wondering why it is not stronger. One of these pulse-feeling conferences was held at the United Service Institution on Wednesday to discuss why recruiting flagged. A Lieut.-Colonel Johnson, we note, attempted a sneer at "a lot of learned professors" who protested against Territorial manœuvring in the New Forest "because of their desire to preserve the honey buzzard". The idea of anyone caring about a rare bird seemed to this person, and apparently to his audience (the "Times" reports "laughter" after the remark about the honey buzzard), as a capital joke. At any rate the honey buzzard is a genuine and beautiful thing worth preserving; not a sham like the Territorial Army these people are struggling so frantically to preserve.

A misunderstanding of what had happened at the conferences in Manchester led to the belief in many of the cotton districts on Wednesday that the strike was settled. The employers' terms were to put off the non-unionist question for six months: Sir George Askwith in the meantime to propose a scheme acceptable if possible to both parties. If it proved non-acceptable, neither side was to take any action involving a stoppage of machinery without a further six months' notice. What happened was that the terms were handed over for the consideration of the Textile Trades Association, which was to meet later. If the terms are approved then the strike will be over willingly: if not approved, then the question will be whether the undoubted distress and the cold weather will break down the inclination to fight.

Minimum wage means all sorts of things, but for something or other which may be described by that name the miners have voted very positively. The majority on the ballot announced at the conference in Birmingham of the Miners' Federation, which met on



Thursday, was three hundred thousand on a vote of five hundred thousand; which gives much more than the required proportion for the authorisation of the notices to cease work. The Miners' Conference will for a few days be occupied in discussing how to interpret this voting, and whether notices shall be handed in to cease work which would take effect on 29 February next.

The challenge to the mine owners seems sharp and defiant; but it does not at all follow that the notices will be served, or if served acted on. What has to be worked out by the Executive of the Federation is what is a minimum wage, and can it be proposed in a form to have a fair chance with the coal-masters. There are many varieties of minimum wage; and the South Wales miners have thrown at the heads of the employers a form of it which has embarrassed the Federation in dealing with the question in all the localities. The Welsh miners are hot-heads, and the Federation had once before to disown them over the Cambrian mine strike. To cut down such extravagant demands as theirs to a possible standard will be the Federation's task in the interval.

The Irish Players have been arrested in Philadelphia. "The Playboy of the Western World", it seems, is an immoral play. In Dublin and New York it was politics; in Philadelphia it is morals—or is it politics pretending to be morals? Political feeling as to the "Playboy" is just intelligible. The Irish peasant, say the Nationalist politicians, is, as an historical and political figure, sacrosanct. He is our weapon of offence against the oppressive Saxon. Synge, seeing the Irish peasant with the eyes of a poet of humour, spoils the force of our political contention. We want the peasant to be viewed as a figure in one of our touching perorations on the sorrows of Ireland. The wrath of the Gaelic politicians is the wrath of men deprived of an argument.

But to plead morals is grotesque; it is even indecent in a country where execution for murder—for which Christy would have been hanged—is almost unknown. (The American murderer defeats justice either by being lynched, or by a trick of the lawyers.) But we have not yet touched on the most remarkable thing of all. These Americans, it seems, are empty of humour. They would have arrested Burbage and his fellows for suggesting through Falstaff that it was no sin to labour in your vocation. Yet, somehow, this is exactly what we should expect from the countrymen of Mark Twain or Artemus Ward.

The impudent methods of Jewish-American finance are being admirably displayed in connexion with the London Opera House. Mr. Hammerstein is now threatening to close it unless sufficient support (which only a little while ago he was boasting he had received) is forthcoming. London will receive both the threat and its fulfilment with equanimity. In spite of the most determined efforts to work the social machine and of the most barefaced touting in the principal clubs, Mr. Hammerstein cannot let his white and gold boxes, and nobody except himself is very much surprised.

We should sympathise more readily with Mr. Hammerstein (or whoever it really is who stands to lose the money) if it had not been for the impertinence of his announcements in the public press. He has professed to be interested solely in art and not to care about money; his project has been presented as a patronising piece of philanthropy, undertaken to teach benighted London what opera really is. Close upon the heels of this comes the whine of not receiving financial support. Like most such schemes floated by Mr. Hammerstein and others of his race and kind, the London Opera House is a commercial speculation, and, we should imagine, a very ill-advised one. Mr. Hammerstein is represented as saying that he was willing to spend £350,000 in order to learn whether Londoners really wanted opera such as he produces. He could have learnt it any time for sixpence.

#### AN ANGLO-GERMAN DEAL.

WHATEVER the result of the German elections may prove to be after the final ballot, they will certainly have no effect on the foreign policy of the German Government, nor will they mitigate the determination to increase the armaments of the country, naval and military. Any increase on the naval side we shall have to meet in due course, and we hope without any display of resentment. But so far as the relations between the two nations are concerned, we shall shortly have an opportunity of proving that this country has no fixed determination to be merely obstructive. The German Government will before long take occasion to make the experiment, and we have reason to believe will regard the matter as a test question. By the attitude taken up in reply our mutual relations for some time to come are likely to be defined.

The Portuguese Government is at the present time more than usually impecunious, and it is known that they are prepared to take money down for some of their colonial assets. Some at least of these possessions are very valuable, or would be were they in honest and capable hands. It is certain, however, that this country would never let any such exchange take place without being first consulted. It is also certain that Agreements exist with Portugal by which the prior claims of certain Powers to rights of pre-emption are recognised. This was done openly in the case of Delagoa Bay. When the agreement to refer the dispute between Portugal and ourselves to the French President was made in 1872 it was expressly stipulated that the losing party should have the right of pre-emption in case the successful litigant ever desired to get rid of his prize.

It has also been recognised, though not publicly, that should Portugal desire to part with her West African possessions, Germany is to have as to them a right of pre-emption similar to that we possess as to Delagoa Bay. The time is now rapidly approaching when Portugal, urgently in need of cash, will offer Angola to German enterprise for a valuable consideration. There may be some haggling, but Germany will be prepared to pay heavily, for the territory in question is very rich and extensive. Angola, with nearly 1000 miles of coast line, has an area of about half a million square miles. The plains bordering on the coast are extremely hot and unhealthy, but the high table-lands of the interior are quite fit for white men to inhabit. Under the present wretched régime every kind of corruption and misgovernment flourishes; slavery is openly practised, and so far as the island of S. Thomé is concerned, this has been proved in an English court of law. (See *Cocoa Press*.) The rich and abounding resources of the country—both mineral and vegetable—are merely tapped, in no sense developed. Here then is a field to which German enterprise may devote itself and find a place in the sun worthy of its ambitions. We have good grounds for saying that our Foreign Office privately intimated that to the acquisition of this rich territory by Germany we should raise no objection. Probably it was with some such acquiescence in his mind that Sir Edward Grey spoke of offering no obstacle to German expansion in Africa. We may assume that with Angola will pass the islands of S. Thomé and Príncipe, though they now form a separate province. The hideous conditions under which cocoa is now produced there would cease, and no one should be more pleased than the eminent Radicals who thrive in this country on its manufacture. In welcoming German dominion in these regions undoubtedly the Foreign Secretary would soon regain the popularity he has lost in those philanthropic circles!

Germany and Portugal then may soon ask for our views in regular diplomatic form, and if the answer is favourable, tension will sensibly relax, and the King's visit to Berlin will be cordially welcomed. If we stiffly decline or make impossible conditions, which is most unlikely, then all friends of peace may abandon the situation as quite hopeless. Nevertheless there are certain conditions, vital to our own Empire, which must be steadily kept in view before we consent. No arrangement will be of any use which bears within it



the seeds of future trouble. Reasonable and far-seeing people on both sides must be satisfied.

When the break-up of the Portuguese Empire begins, it will go on. We ought at once to make sure of Delagoa Bay. The price demanded by Portugal is £10,000,000, but any purchase made in Portuguese East Africa must include Beira as a future, if not immediate, asset. For two reasons it would be much better to acquire Delagoa Bay when Germany acquires Angola. It would stop the Teutophobes here complaining that we received nothing and it would prevent future difficulties should Portugal, for some reason or other in the future, decline to sell when purchase was urgent for us. Some future adjustment of the northern part of Portuguese East Africa may well be made with Germany, but the southern part, as far as and including Beira, we must unhesitatingly and without any possible equivocation earmark for ourselves. That we should have to pay ten millions now for what Lord Granville might have secured for ten thousand or thereabouts is the interest charged by Destiny on a nation for the luxury of keeping a feeble Foreign Minister.

Strategists will be less interested in the fate of Portuguese Africa than in that of the islands. Germany hankers after the Cape Verde group, but she clearly understands we could not permit her to settle there. But is there any valid objection to her acquiring the Azores, if we can buy the Cape Verde islands at the same time? The Azores do not threaten our communications as do the Cape Verde islands, and they would be very valuable to Germany as coaling stations. By acquiescing in arrangements of this nature we should safeguard ourselves and dissipate the charge of pursuing a dog-in-the-manger policy. There must be absolute straightforwardness as to what is vital and what is not.

The German problem will be presented to us shortly in this form, and on our solution of it will depend the future relations of the two countries. Germany should understand, in the interest of peace, that sabre-rattling or press-attacks on our officials have no effect here; they only spoil the market. She should also understand that on no account shall we allow ourselves to be dragged at the tail of France, outside our contracts, to serve la Revanche. The ground thus cleared, we believe a sound and profitable arrangement may be made on these lines.

#### THE BATTLE OF BELFAST.

THIS is an aggressive title; even sanguinary perhaps. But it is not mere alarmism on our part nor rhetorical flourish. Without pressing the suggestion to its literal content, we designedly take a military word, for a military term is more justly descriptive of the struggle against Home Rule than any purely political one. In politics proper we dislike the use of military figures—speeches tricked out with martial tropes—they show a misconception of the whole matter, and more or less encourage a wrong temper. Politics are a contest, but not a fight; a difference between friends not enemies. In this the common likening of politics to a game is apt; and if they can be more truthfully likened to a fight, there is something very wrong somewhere. A state can hardly hold together—certainly no representative system can work—if the parties opposed are really fighting each other, without any common ground of purpose and personal regard. On the other hand, this common ground cannot be if either party begins to attack what has been the common property of both, or adopts methods to get its way compatible only with a state of war. In more frivolous language, if either side ceases to play the game, then a state of war—acknowledged or not—does arise; and in such an event it is better the truth should be looked in the face. This, we hold, is the state of things in the country now. For a long time the Government has been engaged in a campaign of more than political intent. It has been using the convention of rule by the majority—though nobody in his senses supposes there is any presumption that the majority is

either more right or more powerful than the minority—to ruin certain classes of the community mainly opposed to the Government in their politics; to destroy the balance of the Constitution in its favour; to alter fundamentally the relation to one another of the component parts of the United Kingdom. These illegitimate objects they try to attain over the heads of the people from whom they profess to draw their power. They know a majority of the people would not support a Home Rule Bill; therefore they have altered the whole balance of the Constitution in order to get it done without consulting the people. This is not honest politics, and these are not political methods. It is fighting—getting their way by any means they can, fair or not. We have always said that if the Government persist in going on this tack, they will provoke other than political opposition. It is neither human nature nor human reason that people should allow themselves to be injured if they have the power to prevent it, for the sake of a convention—the convention of rule by the majority—which their would-be oppressors honour formally, but really only in the breach. Home Rule is the crux at this moment. You refuse, say the Unionists, to consult the people to see whether you have a majority for Home Rule. Even if you had, it would not prove you were right; we might still be justified in resisting by force; but you will not even take the people's views. In these circumstances we decline to be bound by political conventions. We shall oppose you in any way we can. If nothing else serves, we shall resort to force.

It is in this conception of the situation that the Ulster Unionists are preparing to prevent Mr. Churchill and Mr. Devlin's meeting in the Ulster Hall on 8 February being held. This is but an incident—an engagement—in a war. The Ulster Unionist leaders regard the attempt to hold this meeting, with every provocative character, in the very citadel of Irish Unionism and loyalty, a challenge that must be taken up at all costs. They deem it wise not to decline an action but to fight. In ordinary politics one would strongly object to any such action. None could dislike rowdiness in elections, the refusal to let politicians speak, the breaking-up of meetings, more heartily than we do. We detest the infusion of personal attack or of violence of any kind into party politics; but this is more than politics, and we are forced to the conclusion that the Ulster Unionists are perfectly right. We hope they will not flinch, but go through with their resolve and prevent this meeting being held. It will bring home to the Government and their Nationalist allies that they are not engaged on a mere political project. They shut their eyes to the fact; they do not want to believe it. They want to think that all this talk of resistance is idle, meaning nothing. This forcible prevention of Mr. Churchill's meeting may make them see truer. It will certainly make some of them think. No doubt the cue will be first to treat it as not serious, a mere naughty escapade. When that has become impossible, Unionists will be solemnly denounced as stirrers-up of civil war. Let them get one step further and realise that the opposition to Home Rule will not shrink from that description, and when it talks of fighting means it, and we shall have got to business. The Government may then deem it better to consult discretion and the country.

#### MR. LABOUCHERE.

FEW men, who have occupied no official position, filled so large a space in the public eye as Mr. Labouchere. He was indeed a rare combination of opposites. Belonging by birth to the upper class, and inheriting a large share in a Lancashire bank, he was an irreclaimable Bohemian and an advanced Radical. There is always something attractive about a man who, having been educated at Eton and Cambridge, and drawing £10,000 a year from bank shares, turns his back upon "the perfumed chambers of the great", and chooses to live with actors, journalists, and republicans.

He seems to have a leg in both worlds, and while he retails to mortals the scandal of Olympus, he is thought to speak what he knows. If to this mode of life such a man add the fearless denunciation, by tongue and pen, of abuses in high and low places, the attraction becomes influence and popularity. Sir Francis Burdett played this game very well at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and Mr. Labouchere played it even better at its close, for he did not, like Sir Francis Burdett, turn Tory in his old age. The Laboucheres (whether of Huguenot origin or not) have been great people in the high finance of Amsterdam and in society at The Hague for more than a century, and are still the leading house of bankers and financiers in Holland. The late member for Northampton eschewed the national and family trade of banking (except as a shareholder), and began life in the diplomatic service, where he was a thorn in the side of the Foreign Office. For Henry Labouchere was a born rebel; he could no more help being an Ishmael than he could help his decidedly Dutch physiognomy. His mind was of that irreverent, inquiring order, which takes nothing for granted, and frequently assumes that everything established is an imposture. The exposure of humbugs and swindlers in all walks became the passion of Mr. Labouchere's life, and he undoubtedly rendered very great service to society, at considerable personal expense. There was not a begging-letter writer, or a bucket-shop keeper, or an extortionate moneylender, or a religious quack, or a fraudulent company promoter, or a purveyor of obscenity in any guise, who did not await the weekly issue of "Truth" with rage and trembling. As an exposé of fraud Mr. Labouchere must have disbursed large sums, though we have no doubt the circulation of his paper recouped him. But innumerable libel actions are not defended for nothing, and there must have been a large detective staff, for information, as Lord Salisbury once said of our secret service fund, is entirely a question of money. Nor should it be forgotten in an enumeration of his services to the public, that we owe it to Mr. Labouchere that Constitution Hill is now a public thoroughfare. "The courage of the man", as we once heard a speaker in Hyde Park exclaim, "in fighting the Queen and all the big-wigs to open Constitution Hill!" We are not aware that society has ever shown the smallest gratitude to Mr. Labouchere; but we shall be surprised if the "tardy bust", in some form or other, is not, more *nostro*, raised to "buried merit". When we turn from the assailant of abuses and the terror of evil-doers to the political journalist and member of Parliament, the record is blurred by extravagance and rabid partisanship. It is impossible that so clear-headed a man of the world as Mr. Labouchere can have believed all that he used to say and write of the Tory leaders. He once accused Lord Salisbury of helping a titled criminal to escape from a warrant, and of telling a lie to cover his connivance. He was, of course, instantly suspended by the Speaker, and it is more than probable that the ebullition was calculated. This was not the only time that Mr. Labouchere offended the taste of the House of Commons, for in 1881, when Mr. Gladstone pronounced a funeral eulogy on Lord Beaconsfield, Mr. Labouchere's attack on the policy and career of the dead statesman was drowned by murmurs from all sides. With these two exceptions, Mr. Labouchere managed very tactfully to assert the most violent opinions without making enemies of his brother members. There are many journalists in the House of Commons to-day, some of whom earn their living by turning their colleagues into ridicule—a gross abuse of the freemasonry of Parliament. Mr. Labouchere was too well-bred, as well as too good-natured, to make this mistake. The leaders on both sides Mr. Labouchere considered fair game, but he never attacked private members, however prominent or obnoxious. Like Abraham Lincoln, he had a weakness for repeating or inventing coarse stories, which were not always amusing, but made him a favourite of the smoking-room. This was the more exasperating as he was a really witty man. Most of his good sayings have already appeared in the newspapers, but we have

not seen the following. Lord Taunton was his uncle, and someone, wishing to be agreeable, said "Oh, Mr. Labouchere, I have just heard your father make an admirable speech in the House of Lords." "Really?" said Labouchere, "my father has been dead some years, and I always wondered where he had gone to". On the floor of the House of Commons "the Christian member for Northampton" made no effect whatever. His speeches were as a rule merely *réchauffés* of his articles in "Truth", delivered in a languid drawl with the aid of bits of paper, which he dropped one by one into his hat after use. He once told the writer that he spoke to the reporters, and regarded his fellow-members as rows of lay figures. "Until you get into that frame of mind", he said kindly enough to a youngster not of his own side, "you will never succeed in politics". But it was with a *stilo* in his hand, and a cigarette-holder in his mouth that Mr. Labouchere became great. The editor of "Truth" has never got credit for the real excellence of his prose style, simply because no one expects to meet with first-rate English in a society weekly. Mr. Labouchere used to write a great deal in his paper twenty-five years ago, sometimes "notes" and sometimes leaders. Though unsigned, his "copy" was unmistakable. In directness, in simplicity, in terseness of wit and humour, Mr. Labouchere's prose was Voltairean: it was better than Cobbett's, for that great master of journalism spoiled his effects by exaggeration and violent vituperation. Good writing is so rare in the English press that it is a thousand pities these articles should be lost.

Mr. Labouchere had another conspicuous foible: in the words of a French moralist, "*il faisait une fanfaronnade des vices, dont il n'était pas capable*". He took so low a view of his fellows that out of mere good-fellowship he was bound to make himself out as bad as he conceived them to be, or rather worse. Once, after a rubber was over, his partner pointed out that his play, though successful, was extremely risky, as the adversary might have held *such-and-such* a card. "I agree", said Labouchere, "but then I took the precaution of looking over my adversary's hand". When he was City editor of the "World" (his first essay in journalism), he tried operating on the Stock Exchange, and to help his speculation would write up the shares of which he was a bull, and write down the shares of which he was a bear. After he was caught at these manoeuvres by the publication of some letters never intended for the light of day, Labouchere blandly asked, "What greater proof can I give of my belief in the shares I write up than buying them? Or what stronger evidence can there be of my disbelief in a share than my selling it?" He soon gave up speculating, however, being much too clever not to realise that he could not play against the professional financiers. In the Home Rule days, between 1886 and 1895, Mr. Labouchere was plunged in intrigue, and it was he who first saw through Pigott, and induced the forger to confess to Sir George Lewis and himself, by what means is not yet known. What is almost incredible, but is apparently true, is that this clear-sighted cynic, this laughing philosopher, who wrote himself down an unprincipled trifler, was really disappointed because Mr. Gladstone did not ask him to join his Cabinet in 1892, and genuinely offended because he was not, in the alternative, sent as ambassador to Washington! Such are the "follies of the wise"! Labouchere was what our neighbours used to call "*très fin du siècle*"; he was a very clever and amusing personality, whose withdrawal from politics and journalism left us all sadder men.

#### COTTON AND COAL.

WHETHER the cotton weavers are or are not at their looms next Monday is a small matter in comparison with the ultimate end of those able and forceful men who are at the bottom of all existing labour trouble. It is something that the ordinary man has at last reached the stage of open irritation; that cotton and coal for the moment trouble him more than



"bringing back the ashes". He may take it into his head to think, and a little hard thinking will do much to clear the present very black labour outlook. The Cotton Unions struck merrily without thinking, irresponsibly, and deeming that the employers in existing trade conditions would be forced to give way. Their strike was a tactical mistake, and, like all bluff, highly dangerous. They struck light-heartedly; they have been locked out on principle. The employers had no other alternative, and the clearer-headed of the workers, after a few days' thinking, quickly realised their mistake. But they had come out, and go back they could not unless their faces were saved. So we have the six months' truce, and during this breathing space the workers have to decide whether their unions are to be used for the betterment of industrial conditions or as the cat's-paw of the socialist wing. The Lancashire worker is no fool, and the more he thinks over the situation the sooner will he come to the conclusion that his union is better fitted for raising wages than for holding meetings to learn the socialist catechism. Sir George Askwith's task has been very difficult. Soothe wounded pride and get the people back to a reasonable frame of mind—this he has done. The rest of the settlement must be left to the trade itself, and we firmly believe it will now find its own salvation, and none the less quickly for its few days out. During the last two or three years labour unrest has been general, and in almost every trade an explosion has occurred. No sooner have the railways settled down than the cotton workers go out, and no sooner are the cotton workers pacified than the whole mining world votes for a strike by an overwhelming majority. It is useless to quote long lists of figures which prove that the best of the miners make excellent wages; in the labour world few troubles touch the best men; it is the average or indifferent worker who feels the pinch. The demand for a minimum wage is not in itself unreasonable. Men have to live, and if their trade cannot keep them then their country must, and however rigidly orthodox an economist may be, he cannot deny that food bought with wages is healthier than the doles of public and private charity. To realise this is practically to understand the coal trouble. While we must concede the principle of a minimum wage, with it must go the principle of labour honestly given. The collier's job is unpleasant and difficult; also to a large extent it is peculiar in being co-operative. Wages depend upon selling prices, and selling prices upon open competition.

The crux of the trouble is, granted a minimum wage, to eliminate those who shirk an honest day's work. The employers not unnaturally fear union "ca' canny" tricks, and the colliers what they term "speeding-up". The nature of coal-getting is such that the rigour of the work varies as the face of the coal, and if the colliers insist on a minimum wage they must in equity accept some standard of labour fixed on the basis of coal actually got by themselves. It is impossible to strike an average with all the lower factors eliminated. We believe that if the principle of a minimum wage were accepted, it would be possible to avoid a strike. So long as open competition rules a market price, wages must remain within a limit which allows a profit, otherwise a pit must close. Is it impossible for coalowners and colliers to arrive at a reasonable basis of payment? Could not coal-getting still be worked on its present co-operative basis in such a way that the shirker would be punished by his fellows, and if he still refused his fair share of labour be driven out of the family? Unfortunately the socialist element in South Wales complicates the situation, and makes very difficult any settlement. The socialist looks upon all capital as a theft from labour, and aims only at getting back what he calls his own. This section is energetic, vocal, and able, but, we believe, in a minority. Willingness to negotiate cuts the ground from under the feet of the socialist as surely as unbending opposition establishes his position. Happily signs are not wanting that personal feelings will not be allowed to override a growing desire for negotiation, and once a basis for conciliation has been reached it should not be impossible to establish a com-

promise. The alternative is a bitter fight, and one which certainly must involve every trade in the country. For ourselves we cannot help feeling that the men's ballot is no call to battle, but rather a strong earnest that the conditions of their labour have reached such a pitch that a change is inevitable and must be faced.

#### "ALL THE TALENTS" IN FRANCE.

WE cannot expect much from the French Chamber as it is now constituted. It represents a condition of affairs that cannot last and is doomed to sure destruction. France has groaned long enough under that system of electoral corruption which has proceeded from the "scrutin d'arrondissement" and the consequent predominance of individual and local interests over those of the nation as a whole. It was for that reason that at the last General Election a large majority of Deputies were returned pledged to vote for "scrutin de liste" coupled with proportional representation, and until this reform has been carried into practice both the Chamber and the country must suffer from the continuance of a system which precludes the formation of a Cabinet in touch with genuine national sentiment and the real needs of the country. When, therefore, due allowance has been made for these limitations, we may recognise that M. Poincaré has made the best use of the materials at hand. He could not form a Ministry giving expression to his own individual views that would have lasted a week. He had to consider what was the constitution of the majority of the Chamber and that that majority came from the Left. It consisted of Radicals, Radical-Socialists, and Republicans of the Left, and therefore the Ministry must include all these elements in its composition. It mattered little whether the individual members of the Cabinet were thoroughly in touch with their own groups. Men of all parties realised that the time had gone by when France could be satisfied with the weakness or vacillation of a Monis or the corruption of a Caillaux. The country had to face a crisis which might have vital consequences for peace or for war, and every Frenchman realised that desperate diseases required desperate remedies. Still, forms had to be observed, and the new Ministry had to be at least nominally in touch with the majority of the Chamber. True, it was some time since M. Briand had been put down as the member of any particular group; but he was at one time an advanced member of the Radical-Socialist party, whilst, although disowned by many Socialists, M. Millerand was still inscribed as a member of the Socialist group. They could take office without in any way compromising the Radical character of the Government, although by doing so they might pave the way for that transformation in the character of the Chamber which must follow when "scrutin de liste" takes the place of "scrutin d'arrondissement".

M. Raymond Poincaré himself belongs to the "Union Républicaine" in the Senate, and has not therefore been identified for some time with the advanced views of the Chamber. He is a first cousin of the great mathematician and a member of the French Academy. He has been himself a Cabinet Minister four times already, but had for some years held aloof from all political combinations, and succeeded in retaining his seat on the fence during the Dreyfus controversy. For this reason he had become the rising hope of those Frenchmen who wished to emancipate their country from political corruption and religious persecution. It was a great disappointment therefore for his admirers when he not only accepted office in M. Sarrien's weak administration six years ago, but allowed himself to be so influenced by his surroundings as to introduce a Budget which was received with applause by Radicals and Radical-Socialists. Left to himself he has the material of a great Prime Minister, but he is constantly haunted by the fear that he is out of touch with Radical opinion and must therefore not only apologise for his own moderation but lend the sanction of his reputation to a policy of which he thoroughly disapproves. It is



fortunate for France that his natural tendencies are reinforced by two men who are haunted by no such fears. M. Briand is not only to be Minister of Justice but also Vice-President of the Cabinet, and will, as such, have a preponderating influence in its counsels. He may dismiss all fear of having to apologise for the moderation of his earlier years. All his interest must be concentrated in the opposite direction, for if he requires forgiveness it is for his attitude first as a Socialist, then as a Radical-Socialist, and finally as the Rapporteur of anti-clerical measures. There can be no doubt of the genuineness of his evolution, for he could certainly have retained his position if he had given the Left the guarantees they required. His failure to do so led to those bitter controversies with his former associates which induced him to throw up office in disgust, and it is unlikely that these extremely painful reminiscences have had time to be obliterated from his memory. He would hardly have entered the Government if he had not been reinforced by M. Léon Bourgeois, who has returned to office in the subordinate position of Minister of Labour, after having held much higher office in the old days before his health broke down. True, he was once a militant anti-clerical, but it is said that his views have had time to mellow since then, and he has certainly shown conspicuous diplomatic skill as representative of France at the Hague Conference and as President of that Commission of the Senate which has unveiled the turpitudes of the late Prime Minister. It remains to be seen whether he will be able to solve the questions of old-age pensions, insurance against invalidity, and poor law reform, which have hitherto proved such stumbling-blocks in the way of French social reformers. M. Alexandre Millerand, the new Minister of War, has travelled a long way since the days when he argued that no one could be a genuine Socialist without being at the same time a Collectivist. He learnt much as the Socialist hostage in M. Waldeck Rousseau's Ministry of Republican Defence, and also as a free-lance; so much so that he is now thoroughly out of touch with his old comrades. True, he gave some awkward pledges to the railway men last year which prevented his being included in M. Briand's second Ministry, but his great capacity for organisation will find a vent in the Ministry of War, whose surroundings may complete his alienation from his old friends. He may also do something to remedy that condition of affairs which he denounced with so much eloquence when M. Guyot de Villeneuve exposed the iniquity of the "fiches", and this alone ought to raise the hopes of those officers whose legitimate promotion has been stayed because either they attend to their religious duties or associate with those who do so. M. Delcassé has already done something to raise the Navy from the disorganisation which it kept as a legacy from the days when it was administered by M. Camille Pelletan; whilst his presence in the Government gives some hopes that the pledges which he himself gave to Spain in 1902 and again in 1904 will be faithfully observed. There is, however, one conspicuous blot upon the Ministry. M. Poincaré could not rely upon the concurrence of the Radical-Socialist group without giving them some guarantees that they would have a voice in the manipulation of that electoral corruption which is so dear to the Radical-Socialist heart. Other parties might be willing to make sacrifices for the general good of the country, but they were determined on furthering their own selfish ends by insisting, and with a great deal of bitterness, on keeping the Ministry of the Interior, with all its control of the loaves and fishes, in their own hands, and they therefore stipulated that one of their own men—M. Steeg—should hold this portfolio. They may possibly be disappointed in their hope that M. Steeg will act as M. Combes' watch-dog at the Place Beauveau, for in one respect he differs from his leader in being a strong supporter of proportional representation, and has at times shown a breadth of view unusual in his own party.

Will this Ministry of All the Talents last, and, if so, how long? Its first appearance has made a most favourable impression on all sides of the House, and the Minis-

terial Declaration has been adopted with almost absolute unanimity; but this is by no means a certain augury for the future. The precedent of M. Gambetta's great Ministry is not in its favour. M. Clemenceau cannot be trusted, and he may endeavour to wreck this Government as he has done that of M. Caillaux. If so, we may look out for squalls, as M. Clemenceau's aversion from office at the present moment means war. The best we can hope is that M. Poincaré and his Government may devote their time to that great electoral reform to which they and the Chamber are pledged. Thus they can pave the way for that gradual and peaceful change by which alone France can be rescued from the abyss of corruption into which she has been plunged by the Radical-Socialist party.

#### MENE: TEKEL: PERES.

FIFTY years ago Sherard Osborn laid down as an axiom that when an Englishman has reasoned upon any Chinese question, the best thing for him to do—having arrived at his conclusion—is to say: "But the Emperor, Mandarins and Chinese will come to an exactly opposite conclusion". Recent events in China have been discussed from various standpoints, and various conceivable issues have been suggested; but to no European assuredly has the thought suggested itself of a Republic created by Imperial Edict. It is an anti-climax, if one wills, to the attitude of haughty vanity implied in the assumption of heavenly delegation by which foreigners were confronted little more than a generation ago. It is really, one knows, a declaration of helplessness: the dynasty has been condemned and sentenced to dismissal. Yet there is an element of dignity in the withdrawal. It is not long since the dogma that the earth is the Emperor's domain and all its people his subjects, was held in China as an article of faith. Well, the Emperor will now hand over his authority to his people! Dissatisfied with their republic, the Israelites demanded a king; and Samuel, in the exercise of his delegated authority, gave them one. The Chinese demand a republic, and the Emperor, in the exercise of his delegated authority, decrees one. He does so no more willingly, doubtless, than Samuel. He might, with equal justice, warn them that they will not find a panacea for all discomforts in the change. But they will it; and Yuan Shih-kai advises. So let it be!

Various reasons have combined, probably, to influence Yuan in his decision. Although the recent Conference at Shanghai may have appeared to disclose irreconcilable differences, the effect may have been to convince him that the determination to be rid of the Manchus could be resisted only by armed force; and civil war with its inestimable consequences is an alternative from which one less patriotic than Yuan might shrink. Without yielding his own opinion; while even retaining, possibly, a belief that the Imperial tradition will one day revive—he may well be persuaded that the urgent need of the moment is to re-establish government—in whatever form; to gather up reins dangerously near escaping from the hands of the driver. The forces on either side are not apparently ill-matched, and the honours have, so far, been tolerably even. If the Northern troops have recovered Hanyang—partly, it is alleged, through the defection of the Hunanese—the Revolutionaries have taken Nanking with its traditional prestige. If the Northern troops are better officered and disciplined, the Revolutionaries are increasing steadily in numbers, and are despatching large reinforcements to Wuchang, while marshalling others destined to march, if necessary, against Peking. But the problem before a statesman is less the issue of conflict between rival armies than the risk of social disorder. Order has been creditably preserved in cities; but reports from widely separate regions indicate a recrudescence outside their area of the forces of disorder which are always latent and which are dangerously likely to be recruited from famine-stricken regions whose sufferings have been obscured by the political

crisis. There is, too, another danger which neither side can afford to overlook. The Provincial treasuries have been depleted by demands from Peking, which has squandered in twentieth-century methods of expenditure money collected by mediæval finance. The funds of the Revolutionaries, too, must be running short. The sources of revenue available to either must be slight, and to neither will anyone lend. The army chests must be nearly empty, and unpaid troops may be driven to loot. Commerce is at a standstill. English papers may congratulate themselves that "exports of piece-goods to China, during October, show an advance". All exports to China showed, according to Board of Trade returns, a tendency to increase while merchants were unconscious of the crisis that was preparing. But to merchants in China who cannot now sell those goods and have to pay interest, insurance, and current charges out of pocket, the statistics appear less gratifying. And what is true of foreign is true of domestic trade. Both are affected not only by political uncertainty but by growing insecurity. A correspondent of the "North China Herald" writes that the rivers which supply Canton with firewood, oil and rice are so infested with pirates and brigands that traffic is at a standstill; so that, though there is plenty in the country, the people have to pay exorbitant prices for food. The case is extreme—piracy on the waters round Canton is always a question of degree; but brigandage and disorder are evidently rife. A letter from Kweichow speaks of alarm on account of robbers against whom the gentry and local bodies are banding themselves, in the absence of officials whom the Revolutionaries had dismissed from their posts. The Governor was offered the leadership but refused; so he was given Tls. 2000 and allowed to leave, but was robbed of all he possessed before he got far from Kweichow. The West river is unsafe for traffic in Kwangse, which is characteristically turbulent: a letter from Pakhoi describes the whole district as in the hands of brigands and pirates who are plundering, burning and committing outrages of every kind. The revolutionary authorities of Yunnan, who calmly put their Governor on board a train for Jong-King, appear to have that province better in hand. Foreigners have been customarily protected. In the exceptional cases of maltreatment it is the mob within cities—as at Singan—or robber bands without—as in Honan—who have been guilty; the revolutionary troops or gentry habitually lending help. Conditions of course vary greatly over such a vast area; but the commercial community of Shanghai has practically summed up the situation in a representation (to Peking) that throughout the Southern, Central and Western provinces the authority of the dynasty has ceased to be effective; that a continuance of the conflict will ruin merchants, cause China to make default in her obligations, and jeopardise the lives and property of peaceful Chinese.

It may well have seemed to Yuan Shih-kai that the only alternative was to establish, at once, any form of government which might command measurable unanimity and be likely to recover administrative control; and his advice has apparently prevailed with a dynasty conscious, as it must be, that it would collapse at once if his support were withdrawn. Yet it is this man—who appears to stand practically alone for the chances of peace—that certain fanatics thought it opportune to kill. The attempt failed, happily, as such misdeeds have a way of failing, and may even be beneficent if it opens the eyes of those not blinded by fanaticism to the risks which the situation involves. Yuan's death might, of course, dishearten the Northern troops; but it would more probably enrage them, and pave the way for disorders which are hardly kept in check by his prestige. It would almost certainly, at any rate, have led to resumption of the hostilities which he was actually engaged in trying to avert. For it was on his return from an audience with the Empress-Dowager, at which he had, presumably, been discussing the terms of the Edict which is to set up the much-desired Republic that the bombs were thrown. The revolutionary authorities will doubtless repudiate

and sincerely reprehend the crime; but it is unpleasantly reminiscent of the attempt to assassinate the Regent by means of an electric mine, last year, and indicates a danger which always threatens public men at the hands of fanatics who fail to perceive that murder is more likely to discredit than to further a cause. It will be fortunate if the attempt has no worse consequence, in the present instance, than delay. For there seems reasonable ground to suppose that terms may be reached when negotiations are resumed. The princes seem willing to go, and the Revolutionaries willing to facilitate their withdrawal. Such vast changes can never be easy; but the most urgent problem that presents itself is the personality of the Chief of the State. For a President of a Republic must be elected by the people or by a representative assembly; yet the choice and gathering of such an assembly, however roughly elected, must require appreciable time during which government will remain slack and the state of the country tend to grow worse, unless due provision be made. The so-called National Assembly at Peking, which is supposed to be still in session, might have served the purpose of a provisional election if it had been animate; but it seems to have dropped into ineptitude; half its members have returned to the provinces, and of those that remain the majority are Government nominees. It is consistent with the idea of an Imperially created Republic that the Throne should nominate an interim President, pending an expression of the popular will. Dr. Morrison says in the "Times" that it is "being arranged" that two Edicts shall be issued; in one Yuan Shih-kai is given full power to establish a Republic, whereupon the Nankin Conference will elect Yuan president, Sun Yat Sen retiring in his favour. In the second Edict the Throne will abdicate. This would certainly be the best way of bringing about the transformation.

#### THE CITY.

THE Stock Markets have been "spotty" this week, to use a local colloquialism. Sharp rises here and there, a few declines in places, and dulness in between! Consols, aided by Sinking Fund purchases, have been a model of firmness, and as the week progressed the general sentiment became optimistic, despite the depressing climatic influences. In the Home Railway department a hopeful view was taken of the labour outlook in the cotton and coal trades, and with the commencement of the dividend season greater attention was devoted to railway securities. The first announcement—that of the Great Eastern Railway—was not encouraging. The rate of dividend is unchanged at  $4\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. for the half-year, but a very large proportion of the increase in gross receipts has evidently been swallowed up in expenditure. Although this does not necessarily indicate the position of other companies, it had the effect of curbing any extravagant expectations regarding the announcements to be made next week. On the other hand, the results published by the Metropolitan District Railway were unexpectedly good. The first preference stock receives its full dividend for the half-year; 1 per cent. (actual) is to be paid on the second preference, and there remains £10,000 to go to reserve and £2000 to carry forward. For the corresponding half of last year the first preference stock only received a dividend at the rate of  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent., and £10,000 went to renewals, with £2020 carried forward. If the District line obtains any benefit from the tube-bus amalgamation, a dividend on the ordinary stock at some future date is within the realm of probability.

The official publication of the proposals for the fusion of the London General Omnibus Company and the Underground Electric Company has been postponed from day to day on account of the opposition of one of the directors of the Omnibus Company and of a Stock Exchange group which holds a large block of L.G.O. stock. It is expected that circulars from the directors of the company and from the opposition will be in the hands of shareholders to-day (Saturday). The delay has been caused by the fact that the opposition held



sufficient stock to prevent the Speyer interests from having the necessary three-quarters majority to carry their scheme through, and several abortive private meetings have been held in endeavouring to arrive at a basis of agreement. Meanwhile L.G.O. stock has steadily advanced, and Underground income bonds have been largely bought in anticipation of the benefits that will be derived by the company if the amalgamation is effected.

Canadian Pacific stock came into demand for a time, but the news that the sum of £4,000,000 will be spent during the year on improving the system west of the Great Lakes induced some selling. Grand Trunks, despite a falling-off in receipts, have gained strength. The Foreign Railway market has provided two or three good features. Brazil railway stock, in the hands of an Anglo-French group, made a further big advance, the rise this year having amounted to nearly 20 points. Some profit-taking was naturally indulged in during the last few days, so that the top prices have not quite been maintained. Mexican North-Westerns have also started a pronounced upward movement, under the auspices of the same group. Mexican railway securities have maintained their firmness, and further progress has been registered by United of Havana stock. In Argentine rails the strike has caused a reduction of business, but private advices anticipate a speedy settlement of the labour troubles. Traffics are only temporarily affected, as practically the whole of the loss in current receipts will be made up when normal conditions are resumed.

Mining Markets have not yet given any signs of a revival, but the outlook is certainly more hopeful. The meeting of the East Rand Proprietary Company on Thursday last should be the "happy ending" of an unfortunate episode as regards Kaffirs, and public confidence should gradually recover. As far as concerns Rhodesians, the amalgamation of the Gold Fields Rhodesian Company and the Rhodesia Exploration Company will no doubt be regarded as the commencement of a new chapter in the history of the mining industry, and as soon as the Amalgamated Properties meeting has cleared up discussion of that company's affairs, a better tone may be expected in Rhodesian shares.

In the Miscellaneous sections the excitement in Marconis has subsided, and the weak bull element has retired. West India and Panama Telegraph shares are being bought in anticipation of increased business when the Panama Canal is opened. Rubber shares are not quite in such high favour as they were a week ago, but interest will no doubt revive as the dividend announcements come along.

### INSURANCE.

#### THE NATIONAL MUTUAL LIFE ASSURANCE SOCIETY.

**A**MONG the life offices which were established during the fourth decade of the nineteenth century two of the more successful were the National Life Assurance Society, founded 1830, and the Mutual Life Assurance Society, which came into existence four years later. In 1896 the businesses of these two societies were amalgamated under the present title, and a new series of policies was begun. At the time of the fusion the expediency of the step taken was somewhat disputed, but subsequent events have proved that the judgment of the directors was correct. Neither office was sufficiently important to compete with more powerful rivals on anything like equal terms. In each case the expenditure was comparatively heavy, preventing satisfactory bonuses from being declared, the premium receipts were almost stationary, and funds were accumulated with manifest difficulty. Since the interests of the two societies were consolidated expenses have, however, been greatly reduced, the business has become more generally profitable, and the position and prospects of the members have steadily improved—very noticeably in recent years.

On the last occasion of a valuation—namely, as at 31 December 1908—policies issued prior to July 1896

received bonus at the high average rate of 35s. per cent. per annum, while reversions representing 30s. per cent. per annum on sums assured and existing bonuses were added to National Mutual policies of more recent origin. A "compound" bonus at the rate of 30s. per cent. satisfies most policy-holders, but it is evident that an appreciably superior bonus might safely have been declared. At the end of 1908 the funds amounted to £2,874,628, having increased by £252,603 during the five years. Of the former sum only £2,592,717 was required for the future protection of the members, leaving £281,911 as surplus. Including interim bonuses to the amount of about £6920, there was an available sum of £288,831, comparing with £174,117 in 1903 and £217,992 in 1898. For the bonuses on "National", "Mutual", and "National Mutual" policies, £196,153 was needed, and £14,134 was employed in other ways, leaving £78,544 to be carried forward. The amount left over was therefore equal to about 40 per cent. of the amount actually divided, whereas the previous distribution of profits almost exhausted the surplus fund.

During this 1904-08 quinquennium the National Mutual was unquestionably prosperous, notwithstanding that Stock Exchange depression led to £43,000 having to be written off the value of certain securities. Compared with the results obtained in the preceding five years the net new business showed an increase of £591,227, from £1,314,298 to £1,905,525; the new annual premiums increased from £48,386 to £66,286, and the single premiums from £10,708 to £12,471; the premium income rose from £179,251 to £197,076, and the interest income from £98,556 to £104,107; on the other hand, there was a decrease from £923,272 to £802,500 in the amount of the death claims—a welcome improvement that may be largely ascribed to the steady influx of new and healthy lives.

It may be questioned whether the operations of the current 1909-13 valuation term will lead to quite such satisfactory results, but the report for 1911 will indicate that substantial progress has been made. The new business of the first three years compares well with the return made for the corresponding period of the 1904-8 quinquennium, and already the total premium income has risen to £202,723, while interest, after deducting income tax, yielded £114,123 last year, and £6992 was derived from reversions fallen in and securities realised. In each of the last two years, again, the claim experience of the society has been exceptionally favourable, justifying the belief that useful mortality profits have so far been realised, notwithstanding the largeness of the sums that had to be found for claims in 1909. Expenses, moreover, have remained normal—round about 15 per cent. of the premium income, and a rather higher average rate of interest appears to have been earned. However, the really important points to note are these:—The new quinquennium was started with a large unappropriated balance, and the securities on 31 December were valued below their actual market valuation. Last year the sum of £13,188 was devoted to writing down securities, but the funds increased by £60,758 to £3,004,291, or £129,663 above their amount on 31 December 1908, the date of the last valuation. At first sight this gain seems rather insignificant, but it must be remembered that in 1909, when heavy claims and special expenses had to be met, there was a small decrease in the amount accumulated.

### FOOTLIGHTS AND THE SUPER-DOLL.

By JOHN PALMER.

**S**OME day between now and the year 1999 an historian will sit down to write a "History of European Civilisation in the Age of Advertisement". What will he find to say of the London theatres at the beginning of the twentieth century? Names, which to-day are loud in our ears, he will not care to mention. Mr. Shaw will scarcely come into this chapter of the History. His plays will already have been dealt with by way of lighter illustration in the chapter on Economics. Possibly he will be referred to



as typically a successful West End playwright of the day; and scholars will be directed to "Mrs. Warren's Profession" as indicating the kind of amusement in which their more frivolous ancestors delighted with unaffected simplicity. "Man and Superman" will be found bracketed with "The Perplexed Husband" or "Baby Mine" as typical of the lighter farces of the period—expressly written, as the historian will remember, for Mr. Robert Loraine and Miss Pauline Chase at the "Criterion". Sir Herbert Tree will appear as an interesting survival, living over from the age that went before; a producer of stupendous ability, born a generation late. Sir George Alexander will already have been mentioned in the chapter on Municipal Government; though possibly he will here be alluded to as a celebrated producer of the comedies of Oscar Wilde, very greatly admired in their day. (Sir George's performance as John Worthing will become classical as the years go by.) Mr. Granville Barker will be noticed as the famous first director of the Shakespeare National Memorial Theatre (1916-1953); who succeeded in abolishing the Censor, the Actor-Manager, the Leading Lady, the Long-Run System and the Well-Made Play. Mr. Arthur Bouchier, O.U.D.S., will already have been dealt with in the chapter on University Sports and Pastimes; Mr. Waller in the chapter on Fencing and other Manly Accomplishments; whereas Miss Julia Neilson and others will appear in a section upon Costumes of the Period. So far, however, our historian has not arrived even at the fringe of his subject, save, perhaps, in his reference to Sir Herbert Tree. For he will look into the theatre for something which will bring it into line with the general history of æsthetics; and he will speedily discover that a movement of real importance was at this time in progress, to which, in clumsy professorial language, he will give some fearful name, such as "The Anti-Naturalistic Reaction". Probably he will fasten upon Mr. Edward Gordon Craig as the *reductio ad absurdum* of the crusade. For logic is a mad dog; and Mr. Craig has been bitten hard.

This reaction is powerful enough to bring together naturally into a single article the names of three men so entirely unlike as Mr. Craig, Mr. W. B. Yeats, and Professor Reinhardt. Mr. Craig and Mr. Yeats for their theories, Professor Reinhardt for his practice, are destructive of the older generation of producers. I do not know whether Professor Reinhardt is a man with a theory (he does not produce as if he were); but, in witnessing "The Miracle", there are continually moments when we are reminded of these critics of the older method. I confine myself strictly to Mr. Craig and to Mr. Yeats; for they have written of their faith in two books\* which have only just been published, and the two books are before me as I write. Mr. Craig seems to have started with the instinctive revolt against naturalism which to-day is in the air we breathe. It was the initial impulse which set him thinking deeply of the theatre, and finally drove him into the wilderness. Soon he was feeling after an "Art of the Theatre" which should be independent of the painter, the musician, the poet, and the actor. For a work of art must have unity, and a collaboration of artists allied to take possession of the theatre is the sport of accident. The progress of Mr. Craig is delightfully to be viewed in his new book; for it is a book only in name. Rather it is a collection of papers, written by Mr. Craig at different stages of his logical career. At one stage we find him explaining how Macbeth should be brought into the theatre. But soon he has abolished the actor; and a little later he has abolished the play. As from these papers we can only guess how much of stage one lives over into stages two and three, it is not possible to have a clear vision of Mr. Craig's theatre in its final form. I understand and admire him up to the point where he says good-

bye to the Ueber-marionette or super-doll; but my imagination fails when he seems to be driving towards a symphony of movement without giving us any clear idea of what it is that will move. Mr. Yeats in his revolt against naturalism (the impertinences of life intruding into the dream-kingdom of the tragic poet) has got almost as far as the super-doll in his preface to the "Stratford" edition of his plays. His distinction between tragedy and comedy almost takes us back to the Greek tragic figure—masked and living to his audience only by virtue of his "beautiful speaking". The tragic figure is not an exhibition of "character", says Mr. Yeats; he is a dream-figure, speaking the beautiful, universal language of the poet. As soon as "character" intrudes we have no longer tragedy, but comedy. Mr. Yeats, the unconscious victim of the movement against naturalism, flees far from modern drama, as he flees from modern speech, and from the modern stage which Mr. Craig has foredoomed to an evil end. At present Mr. Yeats is happy playing at the visible interpretation of mood by means of those famous lighted screens whereby Mr. Craig a fortnight ago, so it is said, made Shakespeare's poetry visible to the eye of Moscow.

But what has all this to do with Professor Reinhardt and "The Miracle" at Olympia? Professor Reinhardt is surely neither dreamer nor logician. His productions are careless of theory or method. Simply he takes the short, simple way to translate his imaginative conception into visible form. But there is a point at which he comes directly into touch with the main body of the rebels. He no longer believes in realism for its own sake. He tears violently from its frame the neatly coloured photograph we know so well. He works on a level plain cleared of the old ideas as to his craft and function. He has, to put it figuratively, abolished the footlights; and to this extent he is allied with those who would bring back the mask of Attica and raise the Ueber-marionette from his grave in the East. Moreover, Professor Reinhardt is inevitably in the thick of the problem which has driven Mr. Craig to abolish the player. The player is neither marble nor clay. Though he view himself purely as a medium or instrument, and lend himself loyally to the design with an inhuman self-repression, he cannot be the perfect agent. The moments when "The Miracle" fails as a production are moments when the whole burden of the conception is put upon an individual player—I am thinking of Mdlle. Trouhanowa—who is not content to be an agent, but consciously feels impelled to exploit her personality. The playing of the Spielmann is perfect because Herr Pallenberg is content to be the perfect puppet in pose and gesture; his playing is throughout symbolic, independent of any idiosyncrasy of manner or feature. This applies equally to the suave, gracious figure of the Virgin. But there are moments, as we watch the Nun in her adventure through the world, when we begin to wonder whether an art of production is really possible, unless we follow Mr. Craig into the wilderness. Her finest moment is when she stands lonely by the great door, a tiny figure reduced to the mere symbol of her struggle to escape. Logically, of course, Mr. Craig, as a producer, is justified of his progress towards the abolition of the play and the player. It remains with those who refuse to follow him so far to find and defend the half-way house where Professor Reinhardt has so audaciously entrenched himself. Professor Reinhardt has extinguished the footlights, but I do not imagine he will bring back the super-doll.

The same problem is raised even more elaborately at Covent Garden in the production of "Ædipus Rex". I cannot say how far the producer's conception was thwarted by his incomplete control of the individual player. It is a question which requires to be answered by a critic who saw the production as a whole. Of all that happened in the arena at Covent Garden, where, as I understand, Professor Reinhardt prepared most of his effects, I caught but the barest glimpse. Apparently there was an active and very creditable desire on the part of the acting management to penalise the people who occupied expensive seats; for few of those who sat

\* "On the Art of the Theatre." By Edward Gordon Craig. London: Heinemann. 1911. 6s.  
"Plays for an Irish Theatre." By W. B. Yeats. Stratford: Bullen. 1911. 8s. 6d. net.

in the orchestra stalls could see much of what occurred below the level of the raised platform. I am therefore baulked of any serious discussion of the "Œdipus" as an experiment in the art of production. But there are one or two obvious points of criticism. In the first place the production has nothing whatever to do with Sophocles. Nothing could be more remote from the conventional serenity of the Attic play than the tumultuous effects of Professor Reinhardt (I judge from what I heard of the Thebans: I did not see them), and the unbridled climax of Mr. Martin Harvey. In place of the grave masked figures of the Attic stage; infinitely aloof; speaking, as we imagine, in level, unimpassioned tones, which lifted the whole burden of emotion on to the poet's words—in place of these, we had about us and in our midst a whirlwind of shouting figures. The tragedy was not viewed as from afar: we were plunged physically into it. Professor Reinhardt has not attempted the hopeless task of bringing back Athenian tragedy to modern Europe. But there is, in the story of Œdipus, a dramatic situation which is as old or as young as humanity. It means something infinitely other for us than for the Greek who wrote it; but the heart of the situation is indestructible—the situation of the man, proud in will and wisdom, who blindly draws about himself the net which the Gods have woven. It is this central idea, in a modern form, which Professor Reinhardt has taken in determining his setting and atmosphere of the play; throwing into obscurity all that is Greek in the play, and emphasising the elements of the situation which, under an altered system of moral and religious values, still exist for the European of to-day.

I am, as I have said, unable to determine whether the players themselves fell into line with the conception of Professor Reinhardt; but I can confidently assert that they were grievously out of harmony with one another. I do not know whether these small discords were resolved for those who could hear them in relation to the whole composition; but for one who heard them unresolved they grated miserably upon the ear. To begin with, Mr. Martin Harvey was not in harmony with himself. He changed swiftly and harshly into unrelated keys; he was colloquial, playful, tender, horror-struck, suspicious, serene, impassioned—abruptly, without gradation. There were some exceedingly fine moments in his playing; but these were spoiled by the intrusion of tones and moods, intolerable outside the modern comedy or romantic melodrama. Miss Lillah McCarthy gave more than a hint of the noble tragic player she will be: her Jocasta was on another plane than the Œdipus of Mr. Harvey. But she, too, must be careful of her passions. The finest passage was her entrance to appease the gods with prayer. We come now to the harsher discords. The Creon of Mr. Calvert clashed in every word he uttered with Mr. Harvey's Œdipus. He was not more right, nor more wrong; he was simply in another key. Lastly, Mr. Franklin Dyall, as the Messenger, apparently in the face of all that his fellow-players and Professor Reinhardt were doing to the contrary, brought into the play a suggestion of the classic style. I admired him individually most of all; but he seemed to be defying not only the majority of his comrades but his producer.

#### MASSENET AND MR. HAMMERSTEIN.

By JOHN F. RUNCIMAN.

TO all those honest souls who feel dissatisfied with a novel, a play or a song unless it makes them cry let me recommend the cautious use of an onion. All good cookery-books give instruction in the art of slicing this estimable vegetable, and this thoroughly mastered it suffices to get your head near enough. Without the slightest mental effort your eyes at once fill with tears; and if caution is exercised there will be no serious after-effects—nothing beyond a little local irritation. This plan seems to me much better than reducing your brain-fibre, if any, to a sloppy pulp by gloating over sentimental rubbish which you must in

some measure understand if the desired result is to be produced.

As however many of the would-be lacrimose lack the moral courage and grim determination to take their tearful pleasures in this sensible fashion, I strongly recommend, as the second-best, Massenet's "Manon". The intellectual strain is practically nil; no pungent aroma has to be endured; all is soft and flabby and sugary; there is no after-effect, and after enjoying your evening by emitting an ocean of salt droppings you may go with a good appetite to supper. Of all living composers Massenet makes the frankest bid for our tears; and apparently Mr. Hammerstein thinks Londoners yearn badly for these moist joys. First he offered "Hérodiade", and not content with this, proceeded to "Le Jongleur de Notre Dame", which, though supposed to be a light opera, is in reality Massenet in the plenitude of his mighty powers as a tear-pumper. Unfortunately it was given in English, and the sharp collision between the words and the sentiment—or rather, sentimentality—of the music must have considerably puzzled some minds. It would have been better to do it in a language unintelligible to any European—then the music might have made its full, proper and intended effect. This is virtually my whole criticism on the work. There is no sinew nor strength: the thing has the lusciousness of an over-ripe pumpkin: it is squashy. Of course there is noise at times; but I have had occasion to point out again and again that anyone can set down enough notes on a sheet of music paper to produce a positively infernal row, and that row neither is strength nor indicates strength. The strength of a Beethoven or Mozart theme can be felt with only a pianette to play it on: the full orchestra only adds to its effectiveness. Play a Massenet passage on the piano and it is nothing; when played on a huge orchestra it is no more—in fact the disparity between the means and the end makes it sound even less. Massenet stands for the graceful and pitifully weak side of the French artistic nature; and it will be a pity if English audiences are ever educated down to respect the musical produce of a gentleman who was created for the drawing-room and nothing else.

It is only fair to Mr. Hammerstein to say that his performances have been throughout excellent. The orchestra is as good as any in London; the chorus is the best opera-chorus I have ever heard; the soloists are singers who will make great reputations. The ensemble is as near perfection as can be hoped for in an imperfect world; and the whole proceedings are characterised by a rare freshness and enthusiasm. But while I gladly admit all this I am bound also to ask what is the use of excellence in performance if the works performed are not excellent? Does Mr. Hammerstein seriously think that the London opera-going public wants to hear such rubbish, such stale rubbish, as "Norma"? He is now appealing to the "wealthy class" for a subscription, and he says that unless he gets it he will give us no summer season. This threat leaves me cold. Unless he gives us something better worth hearing than "Norma"—and for that matter "Hérodiade", "The Juggler of Notre Dame" and "Quo Vadis"—there is no reason why he should be supported. When he started he had a fine opportunity, an opportunity that may not yet be lost, to rout Covent Garden by giving fine works with the same care as he has devoted to poor works. If he were now to issue a kind of conditional prospectus for a summer season containing a strong list of operas I believe he would gain plenty of support. In the matter of singers we can now trust him, for everything that he said of his young folk has turned out to be true; we can trust him to produce everything in a fashion that is more than adequate: the one point on which we have not learnt to trust him is the choice of operas. When he was kind enough to invade this country he issued a most formidable list; but we know how little has come of it. What we want is his definite promise that if he gets a sufficiently large subscription he will give certain works.

There are two features about Mr. Hammerstein's



ultimatum which invite comment. The first is his belief that only the "wealthy class" can keep his enterprise afloat; the second is his assertion that though he has sunk £350,000 in his opera-house he wants no return for that money—only he doesn't want to sink more. Now this second statement is startling, not to call it stupefying. Here is an impresario who comes all the way from America as a kind of musical S. Augustine (if I may say so without irreverence) to convert us golden-headed Angles and he wants to do it all for nothing. I said this calls for comment; but it is impossible for me to express my feelings in words: my gratitude is too deep for words. Going back to the first point I think Mr. Hammerstein would do better to cater not for any one class but for the London population in the lump. If by the "wealthy class" Mr. Hammerstein means the society people who keep Covent Garden a going concern it seems to me he need not waste time in trying to capture them. Covent Garden is secure. There have been signs of discontent, notably concerning the Russian dancers who have turned the house into a variety theatre; but with the great dames of fashion at its head the syndicate can defy the critics, the public and the American impresario. It is useless to compete with Covent Garden on its own ground. Mr. Hammerstein of course will accept no man's advice—no man of sense ever does accept advice—and least of all will he accept the advice of a musical critic, one of the tribe who earn a scanty livelihood by telling other people how to manage their business. But I will offer mine just the same, and it is that Mr. Hammerstein should throw overboard the "wealthy class"—who have not, by the way, yet come aboard; throw overboard sweet little Massenet; stick to his policy of leaving the Melbas and Carusos and other prima donnas alone; give performances as fine as those he has already given but of finer works. In spite of his protests I am convinced he will find some interest coming in on that £350,000. He will hate taking it; but, after all, he will have earned it honestly.

Mr. Safonoff is a competent if not a great conductor. There are many musicians of his type, men who know right well how music should be played yet cannot play it. There are also, I fancy, many men who, looking at a block of marble, can picture the statue hidden within; unluckily, however, these gentlemen, not being Michael Angelos, cannot hew to it through the stone. Mr. Safonoff is not precisely one of this sort: he gets somewhere near the statue and there an end. His readings of Russian music are good, but no more than good. I am growing a-weary of Musco music and it would take a much finer orchestral virtuoso than Safonoff to induce me to listen to an evening-ful of it; but still, as an experiment, it was worth while for the Symphony orchestra to give up an evening to it. The music done on Monday night was familiar to me—familiar, alas, with the familiarity that breeds contempt. I would rather hear a Musco conductor at work on some really great music than on the thin, fibreless stuff produced by the Muscos. Safonoff seems to me quite a sincere musician, yet I must protest against the sheer affectation of beating time without a stick. It is, to speak plainly, nonsense; and it does not work out well. How on earth can a bandsman with a flying glance of the eye catch the beat from the hand in a piece where the thousandth part of a second makes all the difference between accuracy and inaccuracy? With a stick the thing is easy and we find a hundred players playing in absolute time; but without the stick this accuracy is not possible and is never, in Safonoff's case, attained.

#### BILLIARDS OF TO-DAY.

INTEREST in billiards has been much enhanced of late by the arrival of two Australians, younger than our own professionals, yet able to beat them in a long contest, which is an undeniable test of merit. Twice—in London, and more recently in Manchester—George Gray has beaten Stevenson, the present champion billiard player in England, and when matched

against other professionals he has made breaks of over one thousand—a figure some way beyond the best hitherto recorded. Though the recent games have been unsatisfactory in so far that Stevenson has been out of health, and as fitfully inspired as in his recent contradictory statements about resigning his title, we have little doubt that Gray would normally win at least two games out of three on level terms. No champion can hold his own for ever, and there are other players pretty near Stevenson in ability. What we regret is the restricted means by which Gray's success is secured. His ball is pocketed hour after hour off the red. Skill, of course, far beyond that of the good amateur is needed to bring that ball into position for an endless series of shots; but the result for the onlooker is one of tedious monotony. Such a specialist has little spectacular merit, and Mr. Charles Roberts, son and brother of two famous holders of the cue, tells us, in his "Complete Billiard Player",\* that the all-round game is the thing. This verdict of a skilled teacher is that of everyone who goes to see billiards at its best. Comment on George Gray's methods may be put in the simplest form. The game of billiards is played with three balls, not with two. This is the plain statement with an obvious corollary that we have heard from more than one enthusiast, and it will shortly be the view of the public at large.

We should be glad to see Stevenson win at any time, because he is an expert in every part of the game, and plays with more grace and freedom than any other exponent of it. The red-ball game can be learnt, just as Peall learnt the spot stroke, and there are signs that our English professionals are taking to it to the exclusion of the various sorts of cannons which diversify the game and give it its charm. If they do, they will defeat their object, which is to attract the public. The public is stupid, but it eventually discovers what it wants. Even in these days of megalomania it does not really want "record" breaks which may be useful for purposes of commerce, but get no applause during the greater part of their making. The same hazard engineered forty times ceases to be, or to seem, hazardous, while the infinite variety which demands a forcing shot, or a nice piece of calculation in which the aid of two cushions is invoked, is lost. The spot stroke and the nursery cannon have been wisely limited. We shall be much surprised if a similar bar is not placed on the tedious iterations of Gray. They remind one of continental billiards, which is a good game, but seems dull after our own, because it specialises in cannons.

The inanity of mere "records" reached its full height of absurdity a few years since in the anchor stroke, in which two of the balls are jammed, and the third makes a tiny progress to and fro. By this method a break of 499,135 was compiled, and was being made while all honest folks were in bed! Commercial enterprise, of course. The public jeered, and the "record" was not allowed. If it had been, we do not see what good it could have done except to advertise the fact that it ought not to be repeated.

Professionals must play "for safety", and take as little risk of spoiling their mammoth breaks as possible. Their livelihood is at stake, and it is for this reason that amateurs are able to play a more daring and even a prettier game, indulging in cross cannons, which are as difficult as any to judge to a nicety, and not prevented from a shot simply because it will leave their adversary a good position to go on with.

We hope never to see professional billiards sink to the low level of professional football. The control of amateurs who are good sportsmen should prevent that. The game's the thing, and those who play "for sport and profit" (the conjunction of nouns is Iago's) have no right to spoil a national pastime. We yield to none in our delight in good, clean sport, which is sufficient in itself without betting on it. Confronted with supernatural expertness in any of the games about which so much fuss is made, we say with Vergil, "Non

\* "The Complete Billiard Player." By Charles Roberts ("Vivid"). London: Methuen, 1911. 10s. 6d. net.



equidem in video, miror magis", for there are other things in life which may be better worth assiduous practice and attention. And, after all, the man who makes mistakes has the better fun. For the ordinary amateur, who may play as badly as Herbert Spencer did, and quote the well-invented story to justify himself, Mr. Roberts' manual should be an excellent help. The exercises are well graduated, diagrams and photographs derived from actual play are abundant, and the writing is free from that stupid verbosity common in the amateur pen. Mr. Roberts is conversational, of course, but that is the fashion of the day. As he knows the game from end to end, we can forgive him a few digressions. Like other professionals, when he gets to writing he cannot altogether resist that sense of the notoriety of his own exploits which afflicted the pious Æneas. And, after all, if the heroes of the antique world were fighters, the heroes held up for public amazement by a complaisant Press to-day are players of games, jockeys, and prize-fighters.

### THE INSTRUCTION OF FOOLS.

BY FILSON YOUNG.

THE grandfather of the first Baron Ossulston was a commissioner for suppressing heresy under Elizabeth; the present Lord Tankerville, his descendant, has decided to deprive his son of those traditional privileges that are included in an English school education, and to send him to Boston, U.S.A., to be educated for his future life as a peer of Great Britain. The Elizabethan fought for the preservation of old truths or old traditions; his descendant is assisting at their demolition. For there is nothing which stamps a man with nationality so much as the place where he grows up and is educated; whatever traditions we absorb are absorbed at that age; the links by which we are bound to the past and the future are forged then; at that age we are molten, and at that age we are minted. This little boy is already half an American by parentage, and now he is to become wholly American by education.

But it may be suggested that the education of a man's son is his private affair, and this is a family matter which Lord Tankerville may surely be left to manage for himself. Quite so. But the bearers of great names are, in a sense, public men, and must expect their actions to be criticised when those of humbler folk go unnoticed; and as their influence is great, so is their responsibility. Moreover, Lord Tankerville has himself, in a kind of manifesto, given the world his reasons for his action, and it has quite fairly become a matter of public comment. It is a dramatisation of his lordship's views on English public school life and on American education. Instead of being flogged at Eton, this young gentleman is being used as a stick to flog Eton with; but I think there can be no doubt as to who will suffer the more from the chastisement. We all remember that grossly unfair claim for the sympathy of the chastised on the part of the chastiser—"It hurts me more than it hurts you". Here is a case where it will probably be true.

The importance to the world of how and where and under what name or title my young lord plies his book may possibly be singularly slight; but if this is the beginning of a movement, then indeed it has a considerable interest and importance. American wives and American money have not had a uniformly happy effect on English society of the upper classes; and it would be hard to say which has done more harm, the wives or the money. But hitherto, at any rate, one has always felt that the evil passed with one generation. The children of such marriages, surrounded by strong association and educated in the deep traditions of their forefathers, were as English as ever. But Boston will soon change that. An Englishman takes an American wife; their offspring is sent to America to be educated, marries an American in America, and has American children who are American citizens. There you have the complete transition from English to American in

three generations. If I were the head of a great English family I should not be very comfortable if I felt I were taking a step by which my family would be practically extinguished in three generations; nor do I envy Lord Tankerville the opinion of his equals among those who are or ought to be the guardians of the English tradition. No one likes to be thought a traitor either to his country or his class; and yet it is not unlikely that the word will be applied to one who has thrown himself on the side of the enemy. For it cannot be too plainly said that America is, socially speaking, the enemy of England. The demoralisation and disintegration of English society are due almost entirely to American ideas. The ideas of the Americans may be very suitable for America; that is their own affair; but they are totally unsuitable here, and that is, or ought to be, our affair. And if a man, for the purpose of restoring the fortunes of his family, or for love of a pretty face and charming nature, marries an American woman and Anglicises her, he is at least doing good missionary work. But he who takes an American wife in order that his sons and his family may become American is playing the enemy's game and is committing an act of social heresy. I wonder what the Elizabethan Mr. Bennet would have said?

Do not let it be thought that this is a sentimental point of view, and that Lord Tankerville is bravely sacrificing the picturesque emptiness of Eton for the practical fulness of Boston. Nothing of the kind. Among the many great illusions fostered by the Americans is the illusion that the Americans are a highly practical and efficient nation, and that the English are effete and visionary. It is exactly the other way about. Under the quiet English exterior, behind weathered walls and moss-covered roofs, is more quiet efficiency than is contained in all the ferro-concrete sky-scrapers in the world. It is the Americans who are sentimental; and if young Bennet is not very lucky he will come back from Boston stuffed with false and sentimental and deeply unpractical views of life, all of which he will laboriously have to get rid of before he can take his place comfortably among his own kind. That anyone, who has any opportunity whatever of studying the subject, should seriously think that Eton is unpractical and Boston practical as a preparation for English life is almost beyond comprehension. Eton and schools of its kind no doubt have their faults, but at any rate they are faults belonging to the time, the effects of which are shared by whole generations together, and the antidote for which is consequently forthcoming in after life. But the way to mend one's institutions, if they need mending, is to use them and not to desert them; and true patriotism would rather mend what is wrong at home than escape it by going abroad.

I can hardly think of anything more disastrous to the next English generation than to be educated in America. For the Americans are a vulgar nation; their tendency, in contact with anything else, is to vulgarise it. This applies particularly to their social life; and by vulgarity in social life I mean general meanness and narrowness of outlook, preoccupation with other people's affairs instead of minding one's own, passionate annoyance with people who hold ideas of life and conduct quite different from one's own, and constant and actual interference, under the pretence of a sense of duty, with those whose lives are younger and nobler and fuller than one's own. This kind of vulgarity is much more deadening and stupefying than the mere vulgarity of display and bad taste; and it is precisely this which American education would give us. Needless to say, it would be given under a guise of something "high-souled" or "high-toned"—American synonyms for something sentimental and hypocritical.

If a few more peers follow Lord Tankerville's example we shall, in thirty years or so, have an American House of Lords (for the House of Lords will be sitting thirty years hence, never fear) in which the grave deliberations of that assembly will be conducted with a nasal twang and a strong American accent. That might be a small matter; but we should also have a mean,

peddling, philistine and parochial view of life introduced into a society which, whatever its faults, is distinguished for straightness, courage, liberality of view, and dignity of behaviour. It would be a poor exchange. As the Proverbs tell us, "The instruction of fools is folly".

### CIUDAD RODRIGO.

19 JANUARY 1812.

By COLONEL WILLOUGHBY VERNER.

THE Storming of Ciudad Rodrigo on the early morn of 19 January 1812 will ever rank among the most famous achievements of our Army. Its conception and execution were alike worthy of the great warrior, who, breaking through the customs of the period, suddenly collected his forces from their dispersed positions in winter quarters and launched them successively against the two frontier fortresses held by the French which had hitherto barred his advance.

Towards the end of 1811 Wellington had once again withdrawn the bulk of his forces behind the Coa and had distributed them for subsistence. Three divisions only, the 3rd, the 4th and the Light, were in advance of the Coa and were engaged in the distant blockade, or rather observation, of Ciudad Rodrigo. On the French side, Marmont had gone into winter quarters and his troops were widely scattered in order to obtain supplies. Dorsenne had gone northward, and Soult was much occupied in Andalusia. Among other things he had sent a force to try to seize Tarifa, an attempt which was defeated with heavy loss on the last day of the year. Wellington's sudden move was a surprise alike to his own army and to the French.

The story of the storming of Ciudad Rodrigo, which has been most justly termed "the exploit which was the turning point of the whole Peninsula War", and of the death of the heroic General Craufurd of Light Division fame at the supreme moment of the Assault, is known to most Englishmen. Therefore I propose simply to show how the various episodes of the campaign were viewed at the time by the men who were in the forefront of the battle and whose accounts, both written and verbal, have been handed down to their Regimental descendants, now serving in the Rifle Brigade.

Of writers and good writers there was no lack in The Rifle Regiment, or "95th", as it was then styled. Sir John Kincaid, Sir Harry Smith, George Simmons, Edward Costello and others have all left accounts which probably throw more light upon the feelings and actions of the men that stormed Ciudad Rodrigo than do any others.

The first inkling of the desperate undertaking among those who had the task of carrying it through seems to have been on 4 January 1812, when Simmons notes "a general movement of troops took place" and the Light Division marched to El Bodon. "A stormy cold, incessant rain during the day. The Agueda much swollen. Forded it nearly up to the shoulders. The men obliged to put their pouches upon their knapsacks and lay hold of each other to prevent being forced down with the current". The troops were housed in the villages, and it was not until the 8th that an order was given "to prepare gabions and fascines, which we were well aware could only be for a siege". The same day the Light Division recrossed the Agueda at a ford north of the fortress, and out of range of its guns, and were posted behind a hill near the outwork of San Francisco. Here they halted and a redoubt was constructed. Simmons gravely records how "several French officers made their appearance, and politely took off their hats and spoke to us. They were of course very anxious to know what all this meant". Kincaid describes how "a number of their officers came out, under shelter of a stone-wall, within half musket-shot and amused themselves in saluting and bowing to us in ridicule".

The Light Division lay by their arms till dark. That night "Colonel Colborne (afterwards Field-Marshal Lord Seaton), with 300 volunteers from the 43rd and

52nd and 95th (Rifle Men) stormed the fort". Kincaid, who took part in this most gallant affair, after describing how "the whole of the garrison were taken or destroyed", adds with incorrigible levity that the French Commander "who was a chattering little fellow, acknowledged himself to have been one of our saluting friends in the morning". He was most anxious to know the meaning of two English words he had picked up from our men during the assault, to wit "D—n" and "b—t" your eyes! These, Kincaid remarks, "I fancy were the only words that were spoken".

The capture of San Francisco thus, by a coup-de-main, probably saved several weeks of regular siege operations. That same night Wellington broke ground before the fortress, and by dawn on the 9th our men had dug themselves into the 1st Parallel. The 1st Division now relieved the Light Division, who returned to their quarters across the Agueda, recrossing it again on the 12th to take a second tour of duty in the trenches. Simmons notes "The weather was keen, and it froze sharply. Our poor fellows had to cross the river nearly up to their shoulders, and remain in this wet state until they returned to their quarters". On the night of the 13th General Graham, of Barrosa fame, surprised the Convent of Santa Cruz; after its capture all the outworks of the fortress were in our hands.

On 14 January the British batteries opened fire. Two days later the Light Division were again in the trenches, "by which time the enemy had got the range to such a nicety that their shells were literally dropped into our work". Simmons records how his task was "to carry earth in gabions and plant them upon the advanced sap in places where the ground was entire rock. . . . I ran the gauntlet here several times . . . always leaving some of my poor fellows behind. . . ."

The next entry speaks for itself: "17 January, returned to quarters in a whole skin".

On the next day two wide breaches were effected, the right breach was allotted to the 3rd Division and the left breach to the Light Division to storm. Craufurd ordered four companies of the Rifles to cover the advance and to keep down the fire of the defenders by occupying the crest of the glacis. These were followed by the Portuguese carrying bags of hay to throw into the ditch and break our men's fall, and ladders to escalate the scarp. Then came the Forlorn Hope, of an officer and twenty-five desperate men. Major Napier, of the 52nd, commanded the Stormers, consisting of 100 volunteers from each regiment of the Light Division, among them being Kincaid.

Craufurd commanded the main body of his Division and proceeded to the glacis to direct the storm; here he received the mortal wound of which he died on the 24th. One of his last orders were "Now, lads, for the breach"! The night was a clear one, and the instant the leading Riflemen issued from behind the shelter where the Division had formed up, they were seen and "a furious fire of shot, shell and musketry lit up the ramparts in a sheet of flame". There was desperate fighting in the breaches, both of which were carried, with a total loss of fifty officers and 650 men. "The prisoners were collected and huddled together upon the ramparts like so many sheep and there guarded until daylight. My battalion formed up on the ramparts and made fires, as the night was a clear and frosty one. Some men brought me wine, ham and eggs. I soon made a hearty meal and washed it down with some good French Burgundy, putting my feet to the fire, and enjoyed as calm a sleep as ever I did in my life before, for three or four hours". So wrote the imperturbable Simmons.

The 5th Division, which had not been employed in the siege, was marched in on the 20th to bury the dead, and Kincaid describes how, when the Light Division marched out, there was scarcely a vestige of uniform amongst the men; some were dressed in Frenchmen's coats, some in white breeches and huge jack-boots, some with cocked hats and queues, and most of their swords were fixed to their rifles and stuck full of hams, tongues and loaves of bread, and not a few were carrying bird-cages! He adds, "Lord Wellington

happened to be riding in at the gate as we were marching out, and had the curiosity to ask the officer of the leading company what regiment it was"!

Robert Craufurd was buried at the foot of the breach which his beloved Light Division had stormed with such intrepidity. At his funeral there occurred an incident which I have never seen in print but which was told me about twenty years ago by an old officer of my regiment, General Sir Martin Dillon, who had it from the late Colonel Thomas Smith, a younger brother of Sir Harry Smith of Aliwal. Both brothers were lieutenants in the Rifle Regiment at the storming of Badajoz, and both, I believe, were eye-witnesses of the occurrence. All who have read the story of Craufurd and of his iron discipline during the horrors of the retreat of Corunna are well aware how determined he was to punish with the utmost severity any soldier who broke the ranks or attempted by "defiling" to pick his way across wet ground. In fact it is on record that once, when he saw an officer being carried across a stream on the back of a soldier, he ordered the latter instantly to drop his burden in the water and made the luckless officer wade back and recross the river, to the amusement of all ranks. After the Light Division had laid their chief at the foot of the breach he had given his life to capture and were marching back to their quarters, their route traversed some deep muddy ground interspersed with pools of water, such as is so commonly seen where siege operations have been carried on in wet weather. Not a word was spoken, the deepest depression pervaded all ranks, the men moving along in gloomy silence. As they approached the wet piece of ground they suddenly closed up their ranks and in perfect formation, as if passing a reviewing general, splashed their way doggedly through the deep mire. Not another sound was heard! But its meaning none could fail to understand. It was the last voiceless tribute of these gallant fellows to the memory of their lost Chief who, although many feared him, had earned the admiration and absolute confidence of both officers and men who long since had realised that it was due to his draconic discipline and admirable thought for the welfare of his men that the Light Division had become "the admiration and the envy of the whole Army". Craufurd, like most military leaders, has had his detractors, but none has ventured to deny that his Light Division, as it stood on that night of 19 January 1812, would, at his bidding, have stormed the very gates of Hell!

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### "PERSONAL LIBERTY AND THE MEDICINE MAN."

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

Glasgow, 15 January 1912.

SIR,—Mr. Stephen Coleridge's logic reminds me irresistibly of Jack Point's

"Wisdom from the East and from the West,  
That's subject to no academic rule".

It would be pedantic, and probably no more useful than beating the wind, to deal technically with Mr. Coleridge's mistakes. Fortunately they are perfectly easy to demonstrate without being at all technical.

In his first letter to you Mr. Coleridge implied that the medical profession claimed "that the lives of the sick poor are always saved by operation". From my statement that no medical man ever made such a claim Mr. Coleridge deduces my "clear admission" "that operations often kill people instead of saving their lives".

Now if Mr. Coleridge took a dozen eggs and dropped them one by one from a height of ten feet upon a stone pavement, all these eggs would, in the ordinary course of events, be broken. But if I intervened and caught some of the eggs on their way between Mr. Coleridge's

hand and the stone pavement I should probably save some from being broken. Even should I fail to catch some of the eggs it would not be true to say that what I had done (my operations) had broken them, while, on the other hand, it would be true that what I had done (my operations) had saved all those which had not been broken. But we must go farther back than the particular fallacy which is exposed by this metaphor. No member of the medical profession has ever claimed more for operations, in so far as the saving of life is concerned, than that they often offer the only chance of escape from immediate death. Therefore the statement upon which Mr. Coleridge bases his argument is false, and this he appears to admit in his last letter—in order to make a deduction which is in itself illegitimate.

I certainly support all the claims made by Mr. Paget in his lecture, and think them moderate, but I do not support Mr. Coleridge's misinterpretations thereof. It would be folly on my part to defend Mr. Paget for saying things that he did not say, merely because Mr. Coleridge thinks he said them or meant to say them.

Might I suggest to Mr. Coleridge that he has set up a dummy whose reality he has entirely failed to prove? He tells us that this dummy is a very dangerous creature, and he attempts to knock it down, asking for general sympathy in his heroic endeavour. Unfortunately something is evidently out of order, for the imaginary dummy refuses to fall except upon Mr. Coleridge's own head.

May I assure Mr. Coleridge that there is not the slightest necessity, in so far as I am concerned, for him to apologise for his silly mistakes? Past sufferings often form pleasant subjects for present contemplation, and the sufferings I have undergone connected with the name of Jevons (whom I recommend to the notice of Mr. Coleridge, though Jevons is probably out of date) are in my case sufficiently remote to make his name a pleasant memory.

A combination of a little of W. S. Gilbert with Jevons might be profitable, for I fail to find in Mr. Coleridge's method of argument even that "grain or two of truth among the chaff" that Gilbert (through Jack Point again) assures us will be found upon sufficient winnowing.

Believe me, Sir, your obedient servant,

CHARLES WALKER.

## SIMPLIFIED SPELLING.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

32 Hamilton Road, Harrow,  
16 January 1912.

SIR,—In a note to my letter of the 9th, you ask whether the scheme propounded by the Simplified Spelling Society leaves room for the marks of history on the written character of English. The familiar features of an old friend, the Etymological Objection, peep through your question. It might be deemed a sufficient answer to point out that distinguished scholars to whom the Past is not without sanctity are numbered among the reformers; and that Professor Skeat is an Ex-President of the Society and gives general approval to the new scheme. I call it a general approval, because the scheme is essentially a compromise worked out within the limits of the present alphabet, and does not in every detail satisfy his exact requirements. But you seek a more explicit answer.

As regards a small class of words a revision of the spelling would make it more difficult to remember the derivation. The word ready at hand for purposes of illustration is daughter. Omit the "gh" and the kinship with Tochter and θυγάτηρ is less apparent, if apparent at all.

Those who declaim against simplification because, as they say, it shatters the "charmed magic casements" which open upon the Yesterdays, conveniently ignore the host of words that spell a false etymology. The



"gh" above brings the word "delight" to mind. The New English Dictionary says: "The current erroneous spelling after light, &c., arose in the sixteenth century and prevailed about 1575: the Bible of 1611 occasionally retained *delite*". The Middle English substantive was *delit*, the verb, *delite-n*. And the "c" in *cinder* suggests a derivation from the French *cendre*, but wrongly so. Really it is descended from the Anglo-Saxon *sinder*, dross or slag of iron. I need not point out that the "c" in "scent" is misleading, as it used to be in the now simplified "scite" and "scituate". He who seeks may find examples enough. He may even find that the present forms are so bedecked with pseudo-scholastic and typographical feathers as to be nearer "barbarism" than he supposed when he used the word.

Were it true that simplification removed the finger-marks of history, I am not sure that we ought without further consideration to hurry the reformers to the pillory. Etymologists cannot be numbered by the tens of thousands; but the children in our schools can. We impose upon them hours of cheerless and unenriching drudgery in order that the worshipper of the written word may have his way. It is a high price to ask for a birth certificate of speech. A poem were healthier study than the whims of English spelling; and clear speaking, such as the Renaissance of the Spoken Word would encourage, is not less delightful than conventional orthography.

By "the marks of history," you, sir, may refer to the history of spelling. You may rejoice in the inconsistencies I have suggested in certain typical words, from the fact that what seems to be caprice is to the deeper eye a most entertaining chronicle—"fossilised history", in Archbishop Trench's phrase. If this be your meaning, simplification must seem to you to be an act of ruthless irreverence, almost worthy of the term "barbarism". But I cannot see why this dust should linger upon our school-windows, though every grain of it be precious in the eyes of the etymologist and the SATURDAY REVIEW. It is true that the blunderings of a past generation form a fruitful and fascinating, but surely a select, study; and I may add that the Simplified Spelling Society is not going to destroy the records which furnish material for such study. The British Museum will still be there, though the offices of the Society boldly threaten its pillars.

I have only a word for Mr. Immo S. Allen. "Astomingly amateurish" is his description of the scheme put forward by the Simplified Spelling Society. Certainly, but Mr. Allen overlooks the special circumstances under which the proposals are made. No one says it is an ideal scheme, but it is an excellent compromise in that it does not disturb the present alphabet, and yet materially lightens the labour of learning to spell. If the scheme does not please Mr. Allen, let him put it down not to the inability of learned professors to produce a better, but to their anxiety to follow the line of least disturbance. One might use Goethe's words and say that the base of the pyramid was already fixed; what remained was to build the old stones as far sunwards as possible. And, perhaps, Mr. Allen's own scheme may not be a darling in another's eyes.

Yours faithfully,  
SYDNEY WALTON.

#### THE MEANING OF THE GERMAN ELECTIONS.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

Berlin-Friedenau, 15 January 1912.

SIR,—Not many Englishmen can say exactly what the point to be settled was, or on what grounds the parties fought each other. Properly speaking, the elections are not a settlement of any definite question, not a vote on the foreign policy—far from it—but a mark that has been reached in internal growth, in the growth of national consciousness. They express the feeling that the old idealism is not adequate to the richness and culture of modern life. Rightly viewed,

1912 is similar to 1879: the mixed Centre and Social-Democrat majority shows that the German nation is abandoning the classic ways of "Blood and Iron" for those of general European culture. The habits of Germans may be expected to grow more and more like those of Englishmen, or Russians, or Americans.

Friends of humanity, therefore, have reason to rejoice.

Yours faithfully,

PHILIP FERRIS, M.A.

#### THE GAEKWAR AND THE KINEMATOGRAPH.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

6 Warwickshire Road, Stoke Newington N.

11 January 1912.

SIR,—I should like to say something with reference to a paragraph in your issue of 6 January 1912, regarding the so-called "Gaekwar incident".

The most regrettable part of the affair is the fact that so much undue importance is being given to the matter. Judging from the kinematograph films placed before the public, it would seem that the manner of the Gaekwar's rendering homage differed but little from that of several of the other princes. The so-called "insult" may easily have escaped the notice of the King. However, the "breach of etiquette" was duly explained, and an apology was offered and accepted. With that the matter should end.

The consequent action of managers of kinematograph theatres naturally met with the disapproval of lovers of justice and fair-play. In several cases the section of the film showing the Gaekwar paying homage was presented separately, after the collective paying of homage by the Indian Princes had already been thrown on the screen. An announcement was also made, drawing attention to the attitude of the Gaekwar of Baroda and the difference in the bearing of the next Prince. Such a course of action tends only to cause friction, to create misunderstandings, and to intensify the bitter feelings already more than hinted at in recent "unrest" in India.

It remains only to be said that if no undue emphasis is placed on the point in question, the ordinary observer of the kinematograph show will probably pay no more attention to the action of the Gaekwar in the pageant of the Durbar than to that of any of the other prominent personalities shown in the picture. The much-discussed "insult" is scarcely perceptible in the film, though so greatly magnified by the daily newspapers.

Yours truly,

E. V. KOHN.

#### THE TYRANNY OF NOISE.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

New Year's Eve, 1911.

SIR,—May I crave your indulgence for an old inhabitant of London who, after nearly a quarter of a century's absence in the Colonial Service of his country, has now retired, and has returned to the old place with a view of settling down, to state what my feelings are at what I now see and experience? A man whom such things have gradually come upon during a continuous residence in their midst may scarcely notice or feel them; but upon the Englishman who has had an almost continuous residence abroad—and especially in the lethargy of the tropics—the effect, if I may judge from my own feelings, is tremendous.

I was somewhat prepared for the Americanising (I mean this in no offensive sense) of our institutions, for that to some degree had already taken place before I left. How far this is now responsible for what is happening I leave to others better qualified to judge to say. Home life in certain circles seems to have disappeared

from London; everybody seems desirous of lunching and dining in restaurants and hotels. Even clubland feels this, to its cost, whilst the risk to life and limb in getting to and from these places has increased enormously, especially for persons who are no longer young and active. I think I may safely say that were it not for our admirable police force such persons might stay for hours on the curbstone before they dare venture to cross our more-frequented streets!

But it is not so much the risk to life and limb in crossing the streets that strikes me as the intolerable strain to which one's mental and nervous system is subjected by the incessant passing and repassing of clouds of motor vehicles of all sorts, from the lordly motor-car to the modest bicycle and the small tradesman's hand-cart. Surely an enormous number of these are unnecessary—I think the police will confirm this—as was shown by the recent taxi-cab strike, when London for a few blessed days knew what peace was. I often amuse myself by counting how many empty taxi-cabs, all plying for hire, pass me in succession in the streets, and many times I have counted from four to six or seven! Think what this means! This abuse of the King's highway existed in the old days of the hansom cab, but it has immensely increased recently.

If taxi-cabs were forced to return to their stands, the number of which should be increased, or to go to others, or if a penalty were to be imposed upon everyone who hired a taxi-cab otherwise than from a stand, I think the evil would be greatly diminished. But in these days this might be said to be infringing the liberty of the subject. There is too much of this kind of talk nowadays. Some years ago I was paying a short visit to that very advanced country New Zealand (I must not call it a Colony), where I was asked by a prominent citizen of one of the largest towns in that Dominion as to what kind of Government existed in the Colony from which I had recently come. I replied that it was "a Crown Colony of the severest type"—to use a hackneyed phrase. "Ah!" said my questioner, "I wish we were only a Crown Colony again for a while!"

Do people in London, for instance, think that they are really enjoying liberty? Liberty, perhaps, to be deafened and run over, but surely not that liberty which most of us hunger for—namely, the right to walk about in safety and peace without risk to life or health.

The worst offender is, perhaps, the motor-cycle, and of this awful vehicle—the more sacred perhaps in these democratic days because it is so largely used by the lower classes—I read that many more than 50,000 are in existence. Of these I think I must have met the greater part scouring those beautiful roads during this Christmas while I was renewing my associations with Warwick Castle, Guy's Cliff, and Kenilworth Castle.

But a rather more recent nuisance is to be attributed to the otherwise less offensive style of vehicle—the motor-car. Lately among some vulgarians—for none but the most vulgar could tolerate such a sound—the "electric hooter" pours forth its hideous and revolting sound, to which the ordinary "hooter" is as sweet music.

The result—for me—is that I am driven from London, and, though a member of various learned societies which should keep me there, am contemplating a quiet and humble residence in some old-world district of England where such things have not yet penetrated, for, thank God! there are still such places to be found.

Are we all going mad together? I always understood that the chief principle of modern government was the greatest happiness of the greatest number, among whom I venture to reckon myself. That, however, may not be until the millennium comes. In the meantime there is that great maxim of English law that our present Government might well take to heart and act upon, and that is, "Sic utere tuo ut alienum non lædas".

I am, Sir, your most obedient servant,

AN EX-COLONIAL OFFICER.

## REVIEWS.

MR. STURGE MOORE'S VERSE.

"A Sicilian Idyll" and "Judith". By T. Sturge Moore. London: Duckworth. 1911. 2s. net.

MR. STURGE MOORE'S critics may very well pray, and with some hope of success, to be hidden from posterity, while envying it the power to see the poet's qualities toned by environment and time. In 1911 two readings of his new dialogues, for example, have not sufficed to relieve us from a disproportionate attention to details of style. We are not so modest as to suppose the fault entirely on our side, especially as we have read the whole of Mr. Sturge Moore's verse and are yet always delayed in this manner, while the more obvious and consistent difficulties of writers like Mr. Charles M. Doughty are overcome once and for all in the first few hours. May this not mean that the poet's style has not yet matured to a full harmony, but is still in the stage of experiment? It would be extraordinary if it were not so. For he writes by inches. He seldom allows one impulse to sweep him through so much as the whole of a line straight onward. The stale word, the glib phrase, the common easy meaningless rhythm, is invariably excluded; nakedness, bleakness, even blankness, is never feared. His theory might seem to be that brief expressive words in an expressive order naturally make poetry. They certainly have made, with his help, an austere and yet luxurious blank verse, varied in the manner of "Samson Agonistes", and interspersed with a few rhymed lyrics. The verse, indeed, bears some resemblance to that of Milton's drama. Take for example the disillusioned young Delphis' words:

"Dead deeds are the teeth that shine  
In the mouth that repeateth praise,  
That spurs men to do high things  
Since their fathers did higher before—  
To give more than they hope to receive,  
To slave and to die in a secular cause!  
The mouth that smiles over-praise  
Eats out the heart of each fool  
To feed the great dream of a race."

Here the undecorated dignity, the very accent suggest Milton. Miltonic also is the combination of ponderosity and exquisiteness. When, for example, Holofernes welcomes Judith to his tent with the words

"Precede me, dear dame, skilled in dance and wisdom!"

he reminds us of Milton's Eve and Milton's elephant. A volume could be written on "dame", and upon the words used to describe Judith in the list of characters—"a lady-patriot from Bethulia". That phrase, by the way, instantly called up before us an image of the Judith of Botticelli. Almost immediately after it called up a half-seen image of the poet himself, though personally unknown to us. This image has haunted the poems. Mr. Moore is of Flaubert's school. Impersonality, if we may use so indefinite a word, is his perfection. Yet the result of his detached method is that almost every word savours separately of the artist who put it there with such deliberation. Not once only—as in the lines

"Forgive a queer chill thought that from the moon  
Entered the tent despite of thy sweet singing"

we seem to be admitted to the studio some time before the paint is dry.

Mr. Moore's Sicilian lovers and old people, his Holofernes and Judith, are less important than the poet himself, and this notwithstanding that he is so concerned with physical and visible things, with a direct appeal to the eye, and a successful one. The dialogue willy-nilly produces the image of an austere and dainty connoisseur. The boys, the young men, the old man and woman, of Sicily, are dominated by this image, powerful though vague. There is less of youth and beauty and amorousness than of the poet's interest in



these things; and thus the mention in both plays, once as a fact, once as a possibility, of the slipping of a youth or a boy out of his clothes, reminds the reader chiefly that Mr. Moore is a very conscious admirer of the nude. A characteristic passage is where the dim-eyed eunuch of Holofernes asks the boy about Judith as she begins to dance, has she laid aside a veil, is her bosom bare? No; only her arms. And the eunuch says:

"She is both wise and beautiful; a fool  
Had been half naked by this time to dance".

The boy says: "She's nice". The eunuch is made to say:

"She feels hers is too sweet a body to starve",

but Mr. Moore fails to persuade us that he said it or to explain what he meant by it.

A time will come, perhaps, when this criticism will be unintelligible, when the shadow of the artist-connoisseur will not stand continually among his characters with such distinctness. Then it may be the dialogue will seem something more than an inessential though fascinating artifice. Then it may be that the lyric emotion will be admitted to have made this boy's song a true lyric:

"All the waves of the sea are there!  
In at my eyes they crush,  
Till my head holds as fair a sea:  
Though I shut my eyes, they are there!  
Now towards my lids they rush,  
Mad to burst forth from me  
Back to the open air!—  
To follow them my heart needs,  
O white-maned steeds, to ride you;  
Lithe-shouldered steeds,  
To the western isles astride you  
Amyntas speeds!"

At present it seems half emotion and half analysis, poem and footnote in one. But even to-day the clear lines and bright air are beautiful in the two poems—in the whole and in many separable passages like this old man's speech:

"... Oftentimes I rise,  
Not needing or not finding sleep, of watching  
Afraid no longer to be prodigal,—  
And gaze upon the beauty of the night.  
Quiet hours, while dawn absorbs the waning stars,  
Are like cold water sipped between our cups  
Washing the jaded palate till it taste  
The wine again. Ere the sun rose, I sat  
Within my garden porch; my lamp was left  
Burning beside my bed, though it would be  
Broad day before I should return upstairs.  
I let it burn, willing to waste some oil  
Rather than to disturb my tranquil mood. . . ."

Even to-day it is impossible not to respond to the many passages where no question of style is raised, as in Judith's speech:

"What! mighty captain!—  
Pendant gold ornaments and loose lawn sleeves,—  
Have these sufficed to warp thy seasoned purpose,  
And dim with fondness those determined eyes?"

To-morrow, we have an inkling that the intrusive personality will have become nothing more than a mere individual quaintness in the attitudes and gestures of this "brede of men and marble maidens".

#### ONE OF GERMANY'S MAKERS.

"Bismarck's Pen: the Life of Heinrich Abeken."  
Authorised Translation, by Mrs. C. E. Barrett-Lennard and M. W. Hoper. London: Allen. 1911.  
15s. net.

THE British public is ill-informed about the events which led to the establishment of the German Empire. One name, however, is familiar to its ears—the name of Bismarck. It is on this account, no doubt,

that the author gave this life of Heinrich Abeken the title of "Bismarck's Pen". But the title is not borne out. Apart from a couple of documents which have somehow found their way into his private papers, the material upon which this biography is based is drawn from the diary and family letters of a singularly discreet official. The more he knows, the less he feels at liberty to write. Had one of his letters got into a newspaper office by mistake its immediate publication would have betrayed no secrets and done no mischief.

To his ability to hold his tongue Abeken partially owed the unstinted confidence placed in him. But he had other, and more positive, merits. He was, perhaps, the most typical German of his time, exhibiting in his own person those qualities of knowledge, industry, simplicity, and piety which distinguished the Prussian risorgimento. He was born in 1809, three years after the catastrophe of Jena, and when he went to Berlin in his teens he was brought into touch with the great teachers at the recently founded University which represented the hope of Prussia. At Berlin the young man greedily swallowed the new philosophical doctrines, and by the time that he was twenty had reconciled them with his religious views and had fixed the outlines of his metaphysic—a characteristic achievement. There, too, he was first inspired by the belief that the restoration of Germany's greatness was a part of the Divine purpose, and that "good German" and "good Christian" were thus synonymous. This belief shaped his subsequent career.

In 1831 Abeken, whom his academic work had shown to have the makings of a fine scholar and a sympathetic critic, had to face the question of his future. His nature protested against the donnish life for which his University distinction seemed to destined him. It was his desire to serve Germany, but at the moment there was no apparent service that he could render. Accordingly he took a licentiate in theology, though not without misgivings, and went to Rome to work at liturgiology under Bunsen. The chaplaincy of the Prussian Legation was soon offered to the young scholar, and was accepted by him with more misgivings. He felt himself unsuited for the clerical life, which seemed to be swallowing him up, and again he asked himself what he could do for Germany. But his chance was to come later.

This earnest youth of twenty-four generalises in an interesting way about the English, some specimens of whom he had met at Rome. "There is something odd about their decidedly marked nationality, often rugged and repellent to foreigners, and mostly narrow and one-sided, but possessing so much practical capability, such decidedly intrinsic soundness, and such essential goodness, if it has anything in it at all, that one cannot but like it, on getting to know it, for the sake of its very faults and one-sidedness. One does not feel that unrestrained subjectivity which so specially belongs to us Germans, but each individual is the result of a peculiar development of a common life based on the spirit of a great people. This will however become less and less the case. Endeavours are being made both in Church and State to destroy this intrinsic principle of goodness. With all our deficiencies we stand a step higher than they do in spiritual things, because we have been through the struggle which still lies before them. It will not go deep with them as it has done and is doing with us Germans; with them everything turns at once to the practical, the external, and in that region they will fight it out if they have the strength. With them everything becomes an outward, firmly defined, consolidated party; their practical and political greatness rests upon this." Surely a very remarkable and prophetic passage, which incidentally shows the translators at their worst.

It was to England that Abeken turned for his wife. He had learnt English from a Miss Thompson, to whom he became engaged. Within a few months the lady developed consumption, and Abeken, characteristically resolving that she should die in her own house, married her on the spot. For fifteen months he fought death, and then found consolation for his bereavement by combating the cholera, which had broken out in Rome. It is not surprising that his own health gave way. When

he returned from his leave a chance of serving Germany seemed to present itself. King Frederick William IV. was attracted by the idea of establishing an Anglo-German Evangelical bishopric at Jerusalem. In pursuance of this scheme he sent Abeken first to London and afterwards to Palestine, Egypt and Arabia. Abeken was back in Berlin, hard at work on his material, when the revolution of 1848 broke out. The weakness of the Government disgusted him, and when, in the reorganisation which followed the outbreak, he was offered a post at the Foreign Office he accepted at once. He could serve Germany at last.

From this point onward the whole atmosphere of the book changes, and the real Abeken is hidden from us. Of his work he says nothing, except that it sometimes kept him very busy. His aspirations being bound up with his work, he says nothing about them either. But it is clear that he felt himself in his right place at last, and when, in the middle of the sixties, he married a second time he did not allow his love-affair to interfere with his attention to the Austrian question, then at its most critical phase. It is only in the first months of his official life that the curtain of silence does not quite fall. He was one of the men whom Manteuffel took with him to Olmütz, there to draw up the terms of Prussia's humiliation. Abeken knew that he could do no more than make the best of a hopeless position, but his true feelings are shown by the instant admiration he expressed for Schwarzenburg, a man of different calibre from poor Manteuffel, who felt his position so little that he could discuss and quote Greek choruses in the train.

Still longing for his man of genius Abeken worked on. In the next ten years he brushed up his classics, studied theology, taught the Crown Prince and helped Carlyle collect materials for his "Frederick the Great", until at last, in 1862, the man of genius came. It would seem that Abeken recognised Bismarck's greatness from the first and trusted him implicitly right through. Only in 1866, when Bismarck refused to countenance a march on Vienna, did Abeken express regret at the conduct of his chief, and even here he seems to have recognised that Bismarck was really in the right. Certainly the disappointment did nothing to weaken his zeal in the critical years to come. Trusted by his chief and by the King, for whom he had an immense admiration, Abeken was one of the pillars of the German State from 1866 until his death six years later. With Bismarck he went through France and saw the Princes of Germany hail King William Emperor at Versailles. But of the critical negotiations in which he took a prominent part he tells us nothing beyond giving an occasional glimpse of the personal demeanour of the chief actors. Only once, when the difficulties raised by Bavaria had been satisfactorily overcome, does his overflowing feeling show itself in his correspondence. For the rest his letters from Versailles tantalise us with such references as this: "The Crown Prince drew me into a corner before tea for a political talk which was entirely satisfactory"; or this: "I must finish soon and take Bismarck's report of his interview with little Thiers".

Apart from occasional inelegancies, the translation is well done. A brief historical introduction to each chapter would have been a great help; as the book stands, many of Abeken's references must be unintelligible to the average English reader. The footnotes are quite inadequate, and there are some misprints in the names.

#### THE TRAWLERS.

"North Sea Fishers and Fighters." By Walter Wood.  
London: Kegan Paul. 1911. 12s. 6d. net.

ONE would not be sure, but we suppose there is about as much life under water as on dry land; perhaps more, though it seems hardly possible that any life can exceed the myriads of ants in Africa. The solid ground below the sea is far more extensive than

the land, and innumerable shoals of beings can live in the thick of the watery atmosphere itself, without the need of perching that birds and insects feel. It must be distressing for vegetarians to reflect that pretty nearly the whole of this enormous submarine population is strictly carnivorous. It spends far the greater part of its time in cannibalism and the pursuit of living prey. To this savage end Nature has carefully equipped the various species with swords, lances, grapplings, pincers, teeth, traps, and electrical apparatus, besides providing for defence by armour-plates, spikes, obscuring clouds of sepia, and even aeroplanes to skim above the surface of the waves. Nor is it only one another that the watery hosts have to fear. Into their element strange feathered beings from the outside air keep pouncing, swooping, and diving with beaks and claws. And then there is man.

It is true that, compared with the general unceasing slaughter, man's execution may seem small. Yet in these little islands alone we are now killing and devouring more than one million solid tons' weight of fish every year, not counting shells, and we spend more than £10,000,000 on the purchase of it. Other seas besides our own contribute—the distant Atlantic, the White Sea, and the waters round the Faroe and Iceland. But, after all, it is the ancient North Sea that still contributes by far the most, pouring in its tons of fish daily to Grimsby, Hull, Yarmouth, and the Port of London. It is this vast system of North Sea fishing that Mr. Wood here describes. He touches, certainly, upon a good many other subjects—colliers, tramps, old battles, and the perils of the Goodwins. But fish is his central theme, and apart from the herring, North Sea fishing in these days means the steam trawling fleets. Four of these fleets—the Hellyer's, the Northern, the Red Cross, and the Gamecock—are now at work, summer and winter, year in, year out, scraping the North Sea bottom without a pause. Mr. Wood seems to know the Gamecock best, as do we. If we assume that forty-five is about the average number of the other fleets too, and that out of these at least thirty-five are perpetually at work, while the remaining ten are putting in for coal and provisions, we shall find that in every twenty-four hours the four fleets combined are scraping a strip of bottom 160 miles long by two-thirds of a mile broad. It is a considerable surface to sweep clean of fish every day and night, and a good haul of 1000 boxes per fleet will give a weight of 32,000 stone for the four "cutters" or carriers to take to Billingsgate Market. The average is, in fact, about 700 tons a day.

However multitudinous the population of the sea may be, that is, after all, a large amount to take from it daily. Mr. Wood says the gloomiest prophecies have been made for generations about the depletion of the banks, and yet the dismal seers have been consistently confounded. That may be so in a sense. He points to the increasing growth of the fishing industry and of the total yield every year. But he admits the increase is largely due to fresh and distant grounds. We fear there can be no doubt that the old Dogger itself is not what it was, and there is a quality about the Dogger fish that no other bank has yet equalled. The White Sea, from which Russia has lately been trying to bar out our trawlers, yields immense quantities; but either the water is too cold or the food is poor. The fish, when they come to the cooking stage, have a disconcerting way of shrivelling up like paper. They want the solidity and substance of the old British breeds; and even these breeds themselves are perhaps degenerating, for the continuous harass and ferment caused by 140 great trawls, each 90 feet wide, dragging over the bottom, with huge "otter-doors" of timber and iron keeping the mouth of the bag wide open on either side, do not tend to domestic peace in the fishes' nurseries, nor to the repose that a sound stock requires. "Silver Pit" is a well-known region on the Dogger, and it took its name from a glorious haul of soles once made there; but you will hardly find a sole upon the Dogger now. That delicate king of fish has sidled out of harm's way to the shelter of Dutch and Danish coasts.



It is little more than twenty-five years since steam was definitely established on the banks, and already the beautiful sailing smacks are nearly extinct. The steam trawler has driven them from the sea, just as the "otter" has driven the "beam" from the mouth of the trawl itself. So far the fleets are rapidly driving out the isolated craft or "single-boating". Mr. Wood thinks the "fleeting" system itself is threatened, because men will no longer be found willing to remain at sea so long, cut off from ordinary social and family life. Certainly a fleet hand is not exactly domesticated. As a rule, he is out some six weeks, and then at home two days or three. Out of the whole year, perhaps he gets one month at home, and for the rest of the time the entire management of the house and family falls on the wife. It is a hard and dangerous existence. A trawler does not often go down bodily, though sometimes a heavy gale will sink the very best; and once there came a Russian fleet. But danger comes daily. A man may be caught in the steel-wire warp and carried down with the trawl, perhaps to be dragged up by another bag in two or three days' time, as often happens. Or a bollard may carry away, or the warp part, and flick a man in half where he stands. Or a liner may rush through the fleet in fog, and without looking round leave a little trawler cut in half. But the commonest dangers come in taking the fish-boxes aboard the "cutter" when it is blowing. With all the boats bobbing up and down, and jostling together under the cutter's lee, while the eight-stone boxes are being heaved on deck, it is a wonder if no arm or leg is crushed, and sometimes a man falls between the boats and is jammed down under the keels, as helpless as if he had gone below the ice on a lake.

It is when such accidents happen that the gratitude for a Mission Ship is most keenly felt. For the Mission Ship is, in fact, the hospital of the fleet; and the doctor there is always ready, especially at boarding-time. It is thirty years since the Mission started, and there are still only three ships to the four fleets, because England cannot afford the £10,000 still wanting for another. Few, if any, Missions can boast a finer record of service. It is mainly the Mission Ship that has driven out the Dutch "coopers" or "copers"—the fire-ships that with deadly spirits made the old fishing fleets a hell. It supplies good tobacco free of duty; it supplies a doctor and decent hospitals; above all, it supplies newspapers, books, and the only mental interest the fishermen get from year's end to year's end, not to mention the Sunday services to which most of the skippers come, when it isn't blowing hard. The gift of a public library is a good thing; but the gift of a Mission Ship would be cheaper, and the benefit could hardly be surpassed even by the finest library ashore.

Mr. Wood writes of the Mission with knowledge, and so he does of the Marine Biological Association and its interesting experiments in the movement and habits of fish. The whole book is full of knowledge. It is almost a model of what such a book ought to be, and it is thoroughly well illustrated. The account given by one of the old skippers of the terrible storm of March 1883—an awful event never to be forgotten on any part of the East Coast from Lowestoft up to S. Abb's Head—is one of the finest descriptions of tempest you could read, and one of the simplest. But complete and first-rate as the book is, there is just one point Mr. Wood might like to be reminded of: he gives a careful account of the "well" or perforated tank with which smacks used to be fitted to keep the cod alive and in good condition for landing. We think he does not mention that, if left in this security, the big cod became lethargic, torpid and flabby. Into each well, therefore, the fishermen used to insert a catfish to keep the cod upon the run, so that they might be landed, not only alive, but brisk and lively. It reminds one of the service Mephisto does for man by keeping him alert, as is expounded in the Prologue to "Faust".

## A SOLID BOOK ON JAPAN.

"The Full Recognition of Japan." By Robert P. Porter. London: Frowde. 1911. 10s. 6d. net.

BOOKS are very like human beings. There are some men in the world whom we like for their good qualities, whose thoroughness and truth we respect, upon whom at a pinch we should feel that we could rely as friends indeed—and yet those men with all their merits are perhaps the last whom we should choose as companions for a summer holiday, or take as shipmates on a yachting cruise. Mr. Porter's work upon Japan reminds us of these friends. There is no question as to the solidity of its worth; it is absolutely safe, a most trustworthy guide and teacher, ever to be consulted in a difficulty, an authoritative referee that has broken quite new ground. It is in many respects a monumental work, the fruit of immense industry, an industry which has made excellent use of apparently quite exceptional opportunities, and it will be a fountain of knowledge from which future writers upon Japan will have to draw largely. That it should have the defects of its qualities is only what we might expect. A mass of statistics, and of tables, the drawing up of which must have exercised no ordinary amount of patience, combined with a well-arranged and thoughtful series of essays tending to solve a great problem that is still very little understood in Europe, make up a book of reference invaluable for the shelves of our library, but hardly one that we should choose as the companion of our solitude, to while away a dull afternoon in a comfortable arm-chair by the smoking-room fire. Its massive bulk—nearly eight hundred pages—and its austere methods forbid that. Yet it is an achievement and an addition to our means of realising the miraculous changes which have been wrought by the last fifty years in the Mikado's empire.

The first six chapters, which furnish a very meagre historical précis, show Mr. Porter at his worst, and might well have been left out. Jimmu Tennō is now as familiar to us as King Arthur and his Round Table: the civil wars of the Middle Ages have been not too correctly likened to the Wars of the Roses in every book which has appeared on Japan for the last forty years, and we have been told ad nauseam that the relations between the Mikado and the Shogun were those of a *roi fainéant* and his *maire du palais*. The history of Japan and the very complicated system of its ancient government are matters best left in the hands of experts, men versed in the language and literature of the country. One sentence in Mr. Porter's book is enough to show that he was not equipped for this portion of his task. "The name Japan is said to be derived from the Zipangu of Marco Polo." There is no "is said to be" about it. We were under the impression that all men, even those who write books about Japan, were aware that Zipangu was Marco Polo's attempt at writing the Chinese name *Jih Pên Kwo*, Sunrise Land, given on account of its Eastern position in relation to China—that Japan is a corruption of the first two words, and that in the same way Nippon is the Japanese pronunciation of the same two first ideographs. Such blemishes as are to be found here and there in the book are just what might be expected from an author gathering information from excellent sources but apparently without any previous training, historical and linguistic, in his special subject. For instance, on page 381 we are told that "after the ascendancy of Nara the capital was transferred to Kyoto and remained there until the supremacy drifted to Northern Japan, and the Shogunate Government was established at Kamakura in 1186". Such a sentence could not have been written by anyone with the slightest claim to Japanese scholarship. Northern Japan should be Eastern Japan, and neither Kamakura nor Yedo, both chief cities and seats of government of the Shoguns, ever held the position of supremacy of an Imperial capital. They were to the Ashikaga and Tokugawa Shoguns what Kagoshima was to Satsuma or Kanazawa to Kaga, and no more. In spite of the

power of the Shoguns the capital remained where the Mikado held his Court. It was not until the Mikado in 1868 finally determined to occupy the Castle of Yedo and the name of the city was changed to Tokyo, the Eastern Capital, that it could rank as holding in Japan the "supremacy" which London holds in England, or Paris in France. The error is not so trivial as at first sight it might seem to be, for it rather leads to the perpetuation of the mistake which tended to exaggerate the position of the Shogun, treating the Mikado as a glorified High Priest. Apart from a few such faults, and from a certain evil flavour of Baedekerism in places, the book may be honestly praised. It would have been still better if some superfluous ballast had been thrown overboard to lighten the ship. Had this been done Mr. Porter would have given us a great book; as it is, unfortunately, he has preferred to give us a big one.

The compilation of a manual containing forty-nine chapters, every one dealing with a separate subject, many of these subjects being in the highest degree complicated and technical, must have involved an amount of labour which it is difficult to over-estimate; indeed, hardly anything could bear higher witness to the immense progress made by the Japanese, not only in their own government, but in the great world of political science, than the fact that it should have been possible for a European writer to obtain from native sources the information requisite for such a work. Mr. Porter's acknowledgment of his indebtedness to the public departments at Tokyo for the materials upon which his book is founded is most instructive. The constitutional changes and the municipal developments which he describes with so much accurate minuteness are not more wonderful than the giant strides which the Mikado's Government has taken in the department of education. In the early days of our intercourse with Japan there were a few—very few—scholarly men who entered the Consular service from our Universities, and who rapidly acquired a mastery of the Japanese language, and so obtained an insight into the history, the religion, the manners and customs and order of thought of the people among whom their lot was cast. On the Japanese side there was not a single capable interpreter. "Wait and see" was their answer when they were twitted with this inferiority. They have not been slow in blotting out the reproach. Not only are all the chief cities, universities, and schools of Europe sought out by these industrious men, greedy of learning, but in Tokyo itself there is a school of foreign languages "which aims at the training of practical linguists, and gives three years' courses in English, German, French, Italian, Spanish, Russian, Chinese, Korean, Tamil, Hindustani, Mongolian, and Malay. In the second and third years, during the hours allotted to the study of each language, teaching is given on the general history, geography, and literature of the country whose particular language is being studied. . . . There were 451 students in 1909, and about 250 others attending special courses". Would that we here in London had such a school! But we are behind Berlin, Paris, S. Petersburg, and even Rome in such matters; and whereas we are content to have some half-dozen student interpreters in Peking and Tokyo, Mr. Porter can show us almost a whole nation at work, at home in hundreds, abroad in thousands, diligently seeking the acquisition of knowledge which shall enable them to hold their own in any international assembly, in any cosmopolitan negotiation.

When we consider the many trashy and often imperfect books which are yearly written about Japan, it is refreshing for once to find a book like Mr. Porter's, which conveys genuine and trustworthy information. It is impossible within the space allotted to a review to examine in detail so exhaustive a work. It will best plead its own cause and assert its own merit. It is a great contribution to our knowledge of the existing state of affairs in Japan. Possibly, or even probably, the Constitution is more or less still in a transition state, but be that as it may, we rise from the study of Mr. Porter's volume with an enhanced respect for the people

whose determination, loyalty, and dogged perseverance are raising them to a position in the arts of peace not inferior to that by which they have surprised the world in the arts of war.

#### MR. BARRY PAIN UNSUITED.

"Stories in Grey." By Barry Pain. London: Laurie. 6s.

Grey is not a colour that becomes Mr. Barry Pain. Heaven forbid that we should condemn any man to the motley merely because it suited him, or make that most paralysing demand upon the artist—to repeat his successes. But there is a wide range of wearing between the garbs of the jester and the Puritan, and Mr. Barry Pain has proved before this that he can do more than one of them with effect. Indeed one need not go outside the present volume to compare what suits him with what does not, since its stories are by no means in monotone. "Smeath," to take the first of them, is a sample in grey unrelieved, and anything but attractive. It is a study in sordid realism, but though Mr. Pain can fashion the realistic phrase, he cannot produce the realistic atmosphere. Doubtless his past is against him, the too long practice of fantastic touches has spoilt his rendering of the plain scene. It is not that he cannot render reality, but that he requires a more generous palette than he has allowed himself in "Smeath". To be successful in grey, you must produce the sense of repose or of stagnation, but Mr. Pain's pen is always raising our expectation, he induces the mood, fatal to greyness, of "looking at the end". And his ends almost invariably, however grey they be, justify the inclination. At the end of "Smeath", for example, we have a great white owl at his master's bidding tearing out the eyes of the charlatan, and flinging him from the roof. Such a scene requires a rendering rather in sanguine than grey. A realistic lapse of another sort condemns "Burdon's Tomb" to failure. We listen to the confessions, criminal and otherwise, of half-a-dozen people entombed by an earthquake. We know none of them, we are interested in none of them, we do not believe in the imminence of their doom, and the author fails to persuade us that they do either. A scheme of that rather lurid type is only justified by being convincing; but apart from the failure in reality, the theme is too big for the space allowed for its development; there is no opportunity to produce a sense of character, and without character in such a recital the interest evaporates. The six stories that follow are certainly not in grey, and they illustrate very well Mr. Barry Pain's capacity for handling the right kind of material. They do not depend for their effect on one's belief in them as anything but light and often amusing invention; their improbabilities do not seriously concern us, and the emotions about which they fluctuate are neither calculated nor engineered to move us. They do not show the author at his best, but they do exhibit the easy command he has over a certain type of entertainment. In more than one of the stories he seems to have missed opportunities which he had ingeniously devised, and especially where, as in "Rose Rose" and "Linda" he touches the supernatural. In "Rose Rose" a painter continues to use as a model a woman who, unknown to him, has been killed some hours earlier. It is a pretty idea, only unfortunately it goes for so little. The author, having ingeniously produced it, seems hardly to know what to do with it, and the curtain is rung down hurriedly on an ordinary suicide as though the mechanism of drama had suddenly gone to pieces.

#### EASY ESSAYS.

"Talk of the Town." By Mrs. John Lane. London: Lane. 1911. 6s.

The first of this collection of light essays is on the tyranny of clothes. Now, if we put aside the tremendous chapters of Teufelsdröckh, there are, perhaps, not more than two ways of writing about clothes. One is the way of the writer who,



sooner or later, is sure to say something of Eve and Eden. The other way is that of the writer who could not possibly do so. To this class belong Lamb and Hazlitt, and perhaps a round score of essayists, past or present, who could, or can (if such there be to-day), do successfully one of the most difficult things in letters—talk lightly and pleasantly of everyday matters in the way that is literature. Now Mrs. Lane brings us into Eden immediately. But we should not therefore too impetuously put down the book. How many modern authors would be read to-day, if we discarded all who did not inherit something of the spirit of Elia? Mrs. Lane has, in these essays, tried herself severely. She has set out to write agreeably of the London 'Bus and of the American and his Holiday—subjects which only the highest distinction of feeling and style in the author can make distinguished. The impression she gives us is that she does not seem to be too keenly aware of the tremendous difficulties of her task. She is, therefore, less affected, and less devouringly anxious to surpass herself, than the vaster multitude of those who have failed to write the perfect essay. The essay we like best is the one on Brighton. The climax of our author's eulogy of Brighton is quite in the polished manner of the light essay: "one is always so sorry for the people who live in Brighton, for they can't go there to spend a week-end". On the whole these papers are so much better than many we have come upon that we cannot help thinking that the author would soon fall little short of excellence if only she could be made to realise how difficult it is to write a really first-rate essay. For the present she is defeated by an apparently fatal facility, which, while it keeps her from preciosity and the cruder affectations, gives to the reader an impression that all difficulties have been overcome because no difficulties are there.

#### BOOKS ON ART.

"Steinlen and his Art." Twenty-four Cartoons. London: Chatto and Windus. 1911. 10s. 6d. net.

"The Work of Henry Ospovat." With an Appreciation by Oliver Onions. London: S. Catherine Press. 1911. 21s.

Very few cartoons survive their occasion. Very few cartoonists are pictorial or rather graphic artists first and illustrators of ephemerality in the second place. Goya, Daumier, and some of the Oriental draughtsmen of course occur to us as cartoonists who inspired their drawings of particular transient events with a permanent significance. An interesting point in this context is the apparent inconsistency of their means with their results. For it is quite certain that the universality and typical significance their work expresses are the outcome not of studied types, but of studied individuals. M. Steinlen, on the other hand, quite independently of his inferior equipment as a designer and draughtsman, will fall short of posterity because his people are vaguely generalised types, and reasoned concepts rather than the offspring of profound perception of individuals. So that his drawings, lacking whatever point political or social accidents gave them when they came out in the daily news-sheets, have little to fall back upon. Not well drawn or strongly designed, and conceived in the spirit of a caricature of conventional types (few the product of sympathy and observation), they hardly pay perusal.

Ospovat is probably best known by his caricatures, which he produced towards the close of his short activity. Mr. Onions' appreciation of his friend would not have been weakened by the inclusion of a few dates, from which the patient student of his appreciativeness might step, now and then, on to prosaic facts. And another inclusion would have been as useful and more logical—reference to the relation Ospovat's work as a designer bore to his work as book illustrator and cartoonist. His caricatures certainly were the least important part of his output. But at their happiest they are the best caricatures we have had of recent years in England. The most effective are, of course, the most offensive, and they are calculated to bite shrewdly. Others are more generalised and crude, but nearly all are remarkably designed to fill their page. This professional advantage alone would place Ospovat above modern competitors in caricature, and it was to his business as a poster designer that he owed much of his sense for silhouette and spacing. Mr. Onions' introduction is written with unusual sympathy and without too much bias. The chronological arrangement of the illustrations and the text permits a lucid survey of Ospovat's achievement. He was not primarily a line draughtsman, feeling things more as tone and mass than in nervously expressive line, so that there is no especial native beauty in his early use of pen and ink. Nor can we suppose that willingly he would have used this medium in this especial way, which characterised a little

school of black and white, working for the Bodley Head productions about 1900. It was not till he reached his Browning illustrations about 1903 that Ospovat emerged into something like a definite individual expression, and reached the level when his "Fra Lippo Lippi" or "Old Pictures in Florence", or, again, "Any Wife to Any Husband" were conceived of knowledge and experience, instead of convention and deliberate forethought. They are really of the profounder things. From these largely massed drawings that have the quality of broad etchings he seems to have taken to working with the brush. His self-portraits are poignantly revealing of an embittered rebellious mind, intolerant and egotistic, deficient, as yet, in human charities, but able to sustain, as this book shows, deep friendships. His oil portrait of "A Musician", if we allow for the flattering effect of reproduction, is an extraordinary feat, especially as it was one of his first experiments in painting. Many painters working hard for years do not achieve this understanding of pigment's possibilities. Had Ospovat persisted as a painter, his position would have been considerable. From the fragments that are preserved of his riper expression, those we have named and "The Talmudist", we clearly recognise a cast of thought and vision comparable with Josef Israëls' most penetrating. In arrangement, attitude, and setting, in its paper and its type, this memorial to Ospovat is unusually satisfactory.

"The Painters of the School of Seville." By N. Seistenach. London: Duckworth. 1911. 5s. net.

A book for English readers on the School of Seville has long been needed. The bibliography referred to extends from Pacheco's "Art of Painting", published in 1641, to the latest brochure on some obscure painter of the school, and shows how inaccessible is much of the material here brought together. The School of Seville is chiefly famous for the almost Oriental brilliance of its colouring when compared with the rich but more sober palette of the Spanish painters of other schools. Again, the subjects chosen by Sevillian artists are almost always religious, portraits scarcely figuring at all in the work of the chief men of the school, Roelas, Alonso Cano, Zurbaran, Murillo and Valdes Leal. Before their advent the School of Seville had passed through several stages of tutelage, first to the Primitives of Florence and Siena, then to the Van Eycks and their followers, and finally to the great masters of the Italian Renaissance. The illustrations are aptly chosen, and not too well known, though among the Murillos one at least of the exquisite canvases from S. Petersburg might have been included.

"Master Painters." By Stewart Dick. London and Edinburgh: Foulis. 1911. 3s. 6d. net.

There seems little, if any justification for this addition to the multitude of popular books on art. To select some two dozen painters and to write upon them in half as many chapters, in which certain well-known incidents in their lives are repeated with a minimum of criticism on their work, is to contribute nothing of real value to the study of art. And the illustrations, which are of the most hackneyed, do no more.

"Millais." By J. E. Phythian. London: Allen. 1911. 2s. net.

Mr. Phythian's "Millais" is a straightforward piece of work, appreciative without being fulsome, and as simple and unaffected in its treatment as was the art of the painter. He does not seriously attempt to defend the work of the later years. Indeed the descent from the masterpieces of the Pre-Raphaelite days to the fashionable inanities and chocolate-box absurdities of the presidency of the Royal Academy is beyond even official justification. Perhaps it was the inevitable development of a character almost childishly simple, and lacking in either depth or subtlety when caught up into the artistic paradise of Burlington House. In the chapter on portraiture, it may be noted, where the portrait of Gladstone is illustrated, the far nobler one of Tennyson is not even thought worthy of mention.

"The Practice of Water-Colour Painting." By A. L. Baldry. London: Macmillan. 1911. 12s.

There are many ways of using water-colour, but it is a mistake in a book of this sort, purporting to be illustrated in colour by distinguished modern artists, to choose so many that really are not proper water-colour, and to have excluded so many that are the real right thing. We take it there is no dispute as to the legitimate function of water-colour as distinct from that of oils. The very nature of the medium imposes limitations on its uses and gives it corresponding advantages. To such distinctions Mrs. Allingham, Mr. Elgood, Sir E. A. Waterlow, Mr. W. West, and Mr. Powell, for instance, are quite indifferent. Their water-colours would

do just as well in the other medium, and so have no special status or *raison d'être* whereon to rank as typical water-colour. On the other hand there is a large school of admirable water-colourists in whose practice the proper use of their medium is sustained and developed. Barely two or three such painters are given. Nor can we see the point, if this book is meant for students, of analysing the tricks and evasive mannerisms of the indirect methods. The colour reproductions if not very bad are hardly good.

#### SCHOOL BOOKS.

"History of Classical Philology." By Harry Thurston Peck. London: Macmillan. 1911. 8s. 6d. net.

This history of Dr. Peck fills for the classical scholar a wide lacuna. The scholar who would get a view of the whole field of classical philology would have to plunge through the three volumes of Dr. Sandys' treatise, from which he would not be likely to emerge with a clear head unless he were something of an expert to begin with and naturally well-equipped to deal with a mass of detail. In fact, many University scholars know little of the history as a whole, though they may be thoroughly familiar with a particular small portion of the field. Dr. Peck, in a volume of less than 500 pages, covers the whole field from 700 B.C. to 1900 A.D. He aims at giving the scholar a comprehensive view in a lucid coherent form. It will be found invaluable by the scholar who wants to know exactly how his own portion of the field lies with respect to the whole area, and is a good introduction to the surveys in detail of Dr. Sandys and of Reinach.

"The Classical Heritage of the Middle Ages." By Henry Osborn Taylor. London: Macmillan. 1911. 7s. 6d. net.

The need for light in those dark places of history through which Guizot and Gibbon went as pioneers is shown by the fact that Mr. Taylor's book, published in 1901, was reprinted in 1903, and is now in a third edition. The transition from imperial Rome to feudal Europe, and from paganism to Christianity, has its centre in a period perhaps darker to the historian than any other period of equal importance. Of this period Mr. Taylor has the knowledge of a scholar, and he has given us the result of his thought in what might be termed an essay in chapters. The ease with which the author wears his erudition and successfully keeps it from marring the outline of his history explains and justifies the popularity of the book.

"Lyrical Forms in English." By Norman Hepple. Cambridge: At the University Press. 1911. 3s. net.

This book gives the scholar of English poetry a half-way house between mere desultory dipping into the greater poets (the method of "selections") and the rigorous study of poetical literature in accordance with set chronological tables and the formal history of "movements". Mr. Hepple takes the chief lyric forms—the song-lyric, ode, elegy, idyl; and, bringing together the finest examples of the form in our literature, shows how it was used, developed, or disregarded by the greatest poets. A good deal of knowledge of the trend of poetic literature in this epoch or that is given by the way; and the scholar will have read the great majority of the fine short poems of the language before he has finished with the book. This way of becoming acquainted with the British lyric poets would no doubt by teachers of an older, stricter school be stigmatised as "browsing". But at least they would be compelled to admit that the pasture was excellent, and that it included all the more fertile portions of the field.

"The Empires of the Old World." By M. Bramston. London: Blackie. 1911. 3s. 6d. net.

By "the Empires of the Old World" Mr. Bramston means Empires down to the fall of Rome. He has written this book not as a text-book for examinations, but merely to provide the outlines of ancient history, and that he does in a most interesting form. He has gone to the latest authorities for his facts, has told good illustrative stories whenever possible, and writes of prehistoric man, of Egypt, Alexander, Rome, and the fall of the Western Empire in a way which will be equally helpful to teacher and student. The volume, indeed, is calculated to induce boys and girls to turn their attention to fuller records, and is an admirable introduction to ancient history. It is fully but unpretentiously illustrated.

"Junior School British History." By Arthur D. Innes. London: Bivington's. 1911. 4s. 6d. net.

Mr. Innes in this volume does for younger readers pretty much what he did in two previous volumes for the middle forms. He divides the history of Great Britain from Julius

Cæsar to King George V. into seven periods; tells the story of each period, and explains movements and principles concisely but clearly. He has a real gift for summarising history in perfectly simple language, and he has a happy knack of introducing a phrase such as "It is interesting to note that there was a single National Church long before there was a National Government", which will be easily remembered, and on which teachers may if they wish pertinently enlarge. He even finds space to devote to English literature, and each section is followed by some useful notes. The little volume will be of more service than many more expensive and bulky manuals.

"Applied Biology." By Maurice A. Bigelow and Anna N. Bigelow. London: Macmillan. 1911. 6s. net.

The only concrete instance of definite "application" we have been able to discover in this book is the section on "hygiene." In other sections of the book the "application" is less obvious. Biology, we admit, "has vastly important applications to human life"; and the authors, avoiding technicalities and minutiae, have chosen to present those facts of the science which they think will be of most interest and value to the general student of the humanities. They select from the fields of botany, zoology and human biology what they consider to be the important facts illustrative of the fundamental ideas of the science of life. What the authors really mean to convey by their title is that the book is more "popular" than technical in form.

"Revue des Deux Mondes." 13me Janvier.

This number contains three or four articles of considerable importance. M. Bourget writes on the late Eugène Melchior de Vogüé, so well known for many years to readers of the "Revue". M. Bourget speaks with personal knowledge, as he was in intimate relations with de Vogüé from 1883 onwards. After serving in the war of 1870, de Vogüé adopted a diplomatic career, which he followed with success, finally occupying an important post in Egypt under the Suez Canal Company. Official residence in Russia introduced him to Russian romance, on which he afterwards wrote so brilliantly. He abandoned diplomacy to undertake a purely literary career. He made his mark both as an essayist and a novelist; he never allowed a page to leave his hands till he had put into it his very best. He was not only a brilliant but a most conscientious writer. An aristocrat to the finger tips, he carried the theory of "noblesse oblige" into every piece of work he undertook. M. Filon sums up the unsavoury story of Lord Byron and Augusta Leigh in masterly style, but why not let it rest?

For this Week's Books see page 90.

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THE MARKETS.

INSURANCE AND THE PLANTATIONS.

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